



Welcome to the Toppenish Middle School Wildcat Band. We are so glad to have you be a part of our **band**, our **school**, and our **community**. Our program will give you the opportunity to be an integral part of all three. As your director, I want your experience with music to be positive and beneficial and I will commit to giving you my best to make that possible. In return, I ask **that you commit to giving your best effort for our band.**

Our class is unique because we rely on each other like a team, but no one sits out. You are an important part that we need to be successful. **Your effort, whether it is positive or not, will affect you and every other member of our band.**

Because of the size of our band and the many people who would like to be a part of it, we have a set of procedures and standards that we ask each member to meet. **Our band represents the best and the brightest that Toppenish has to offer and we will act like it.** We are representatives of our school and our community every time we perform or leave our campus for a trip. This handbook is a guideline for how we do things at Toppenish Middle School and in band class. These expectations are set for you to enjoy your experience in band and so it may be enjoyable for everyone else too.

If you have any questions or concerns about band, please feel free to contact me. This will be an exciting year and I am looking forward to some great performances and great music!

Go Wildcats!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Toppenish Middle School Band Philosophy	2
Performing Ensembles	2
Band Member Expectations	3
At Home	3
Classroom Expectations	3
Community/Behavior Expectations	3
Performance/Trip Expectations	4
Probation and Dismissal	4
Required Supplies & Materials	4
School Facilities, Instruments & Equipment	5
Grading Policy	6
Attendance	6
Fundraising & Boosters	6
Student Leadership	6

TMS WILDCAT BAND PHILOSOPHY

It is our goal that all band students at TMS will experience a high level of success in instrumental music while setting a foundation for growth both musically and academically. Because music is such a powerful tool, it is also our mission to engage our community through performances and service, resulting in students who are aware of their history, culture, and music's place in it.



Our band program is structured to address three main areas: **PERFORMANCE**, **ACADEMICS**, and **COMMUNITY**. Students will be engaged in all three throughout their time in the band program to prepare them for success beyond middle school.

All of the ensembles offered at TMS will meet the goals of helping students excel in all three categories. We offer concert band, jazz band, pep band, and rock band. Whether it is playing in jazz band for a preschool or at a health fair in concert band, making up a test in math class, or performing in Disneyland, we are dedicated to student success in these three areas.

Additionally, we strive to teach each student the importance of individual responsibility and discipline as a part of a performing ensemble. What sets our classroom apart from everything else that happens in school or in sports is that we depend on each member performing to the best of their ability every day. There are no starters, no bench, and we are all affected if someone is unprepared. Students should come into class ready to try their best and learn from their mistakes. This is expected, not only for their success in band, but for their continued success upon graduation and into adult life.

PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

CONCERT ENSEMBLES (Beginning Band, Concert Band, Symphonic Band): All students will be placed into a concert ensemble based on grade level, playing ability, and overall contribution to the band program. Concert bands meet during the school day and students will receive a grade for each trimester. These are the primary performing ensemble for every band student where they will study written music, music theory, and music history in addition to performance. All first year students will be placed in the Beginning Band and placement in the Intermediate and Advanced Bands is decided by incoming 7th and 8th grade student auditions at the end of each school year.

PEP BAND (Concert Band & Symphonic Band): We are proud to be one of the few schools in the state of Washington to have a middle school pep band. This is one of the most visible ensembles as well as providing an opportunity to promote our school within the community. This group is made up of students from both the intermediate and symphonic bands and performs at all home basketball games. It is a fun experience in addition to meeting our goals for performance and community involvement.

JAZZ BAND: Our jazz band is a very special group that meets outside of school hours. Students who participate in this group must be trustworthy and reliable since they will be coming in before or after school. This group works on improvisation, advanced music theory, and diverse musical styles. They also perform throughout the year, including school concerts and community events.

ADDITIONAL ENSEMBLES: Other ensembles will be made available based on student interest. Extracurricular student ensembles will not receive a grade, but regularly participating students will receive extra credit towards their band grade.

Band Member Expectations

The following is a list of standards that every band member is expected to meet or exceed. **Failure to meet these expectations will result in a probationary period and can result in your dismissal from the band program.**

AT HOME (PREPARATION FOR CLASS)

1. Get plenty of rest and go to sleep at a decent hour.
2. Schedule time after school to practice your instrument.
3. Use a metronome during practice time.
4. Listen to lots of different music!

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS (FOR ALL CLASSES, NOT JUST BAND)

1. Be inside the classroom **before** the tardy bell rings.
2. Be seated with all equipment (pencil, instrument, music, etc.) two minutes after the bell rings. If an instrument needs repair or you need something from the director, please take care of it as quickly as possible - communication is important!
3. All talking and conversation is in reference to the class once the teacher has started.
4. **Give your best** and participate in all activities.
5. Keep grades to at least a **2.0 cumulative GPA**.
6. Be respectful of all facilities and equipment.

COMMUNITY/BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Represent the Toppenish Middle School Band, Toppenish Middle School, the city of Toppenish, and the State of Washington in a positive manner.
2. **Be on time.**
3. Demonstrate a **positive and respectful attitude** toward peers, teachers, staff, and parents.
4. Follow all Toppenish School District and Toppenish Middle School policies.
5. Do not receive referrals. Students who receive a referral will be placed on probation for one month. A second referral will result in dismissal from the band program.
6. Do not receive suspension. Students who are suspended will be placed on probation for one month. A referral or second suspension will result in dismissal from the band program.

PERFORMANCE/TRIP EXPECTATIONS

1. Follow trip itinerary and directions from the director and chaperones.
2. Stay in groups of at least four at all times.
3. Talk at a normal volume on the bus. Please don't shout or yell.
4. Ride the same bus to and from our destination.
5. Be responsible for all equipment or belongings you take with you.
6. Communicate with your director. Let me know what's going on before performances, not after.
7. Provide a **written notice one week in advance** if you will miss a performance.
8. Valid excuses for missing a performance include illness, death in the family, or other circumstances deemed appropriate by the director and administration.
9. Failure to be present at a performance without an excuse will affect your grade and standing in the band program.
10. Dress appropriately for all concerts/performances. All clothing must meet school dress code.

**TMS BAND PROBATION AND DISMISSAL**

Students who enroll in the TMS band are held to very high standards of behavior due to the facilities and equipment they are entrusted with as well as the rigorous expectations of the class. **Students who do not meet these standards will be placed on probation for the duration of 30 days or 1 month.**

Reasons for being placed on probation can include, but are not limited to, **being suspended, a referral, consistent tardies, continued failure to participate, misuse of equipment, and/or a GPA below 2.0.** If a second instance of misconduct occurs during the probationary period of 30 days or 1 month, **the student will be dismissed from the band program.** Additionally, students who do not follow guidelines on band trips will be **dismissed immediately** and sent home at the parent/guardian's expense.

Required Supplies & Materials

All band students are expected to have all of the materials needed for a successful class every day. These materials include, but are not limited to:

- **Instrument**
- **Binder and pencil** (with band book, sheet music, warm ups, scale sheets, rhythm sheets, etc.)
- **Oil or grease for your instrument**
- **Extra reeds, neck straps**
- **Sticks & mallets**
- **Flip folder/lyre (7th & 8th grade only)**

Band Shirts: All band students will be given the option to purchase a band shirt. These are used for basketball games and other fun performances, but are not required.

Band books, sheet music and other personal items must have your initials or name on them. Materials checks will occur every 3 weeks and will be included in the daily grade. Students who forget their instrument will be given work to do, such as definitions, etc., for the entire period and will lose points from their daily grade.

Required Band Method Books:

6th Grade - *Measures of Success Book 1* (blue)

7th Grade - *Measures of Success Book 2* (orange)



Required Instrument Specific Supplies for All Band Members:

- **Flutes:** cleaning cloth and cleaning rod
- **Clarinet & Saxes:** Cleaning swab, box of reeds (size 2.5), reed guard
- **Brass:** Valve/slide oil, slide grease, mouthpiece brush, cleaning snake and cloth
- **Percussion:** pair of drumsticks (**IP-LD preferred; Vic Firth SD 1, 5B and 2B sizes are also allowed**), and practice pad, stick bag is optional

School Facilities, Instruments & Equipment

Toppenish is privileged to have a large music program with practice rooms, computers, and extensive musical equipment. Our band room is different from any other classroom in our school and needs to be treated as such. **Band members are expected to treat all facilities we use with respect and cleanliness.** Our motto is "leave a place better than you found it". **Do not bring food, drinks, or gum into the band room (with the exception of water).** You will be asked to throw away any drinks/food you bring into our band room.

Instruments

Our program is fortunate to have a wide variety of wind and percussion instruments that are too expensive for students to own individually. These instruments are not cheap. We have been privileged to receive multiple grants to help pay for some of these larger instruments. Students who use these instruments are expected to take proper care of them. Misusing our equipment will result in a probationary period and can result in dismissal from the band program. **Misuse of equipment will result in the student being charged for the repair/replacement cost. There is a flat rental fee of \$50 for the entire year to use a school owned instrument.**

Students using school instruments are expected to meet the following guidelines:

1. Treat the instrument with care.
2. Do not leave the instrument in a position to be dropped or walked on.
3. Always store the instrument secured in its case.
4. Always store your instrument in its specific cubby.
5. Reed players will remove the reed and mouthpiece when storing their instrument.
6. Percussion players will cover and store all instruments after use.

Computers, Sound System, and Other Equipment

For students to use our computers and software, they must first sign-in to a practice room. When they are finished, students are responsible to make sure the door is locked and sign-out of the practice room. Failure to follow these steps can lead to the **misuse or destruction of school property** and can result in **students being charged repair costs or dismissed from the band program.** All other equipment, including amplifiers, microphones, sound system, etc. **will not be used by any band member who has not been instructed in how to use them.** These are expensive pieces of equipment and even slight misuse can cause them to malfunction. **Unless specifically shown and instructed by the director, please do not use this equipment.**

Storage Cubbies

Every student will be assigned a storage cubby in the band room. Students are required to **keep storage cubbies clean and orderly - no open food or drink containers are allowed.** Only band items should be stored in your cubbies and **valuables should not be left in them - they do not close or lock.**

Grading Policy

At Toppenish Middle School, we use a 4 level system that takes into account student musicianship and performance. This means that a student's grade is based on evidence that the student has met the academic standards of the class, displayed growth in rehearsal procedures, and can musically perform at an appropriate level. All standards are posted within the classroom and students are provided the same rubric the conductor uses for their own reflection.

Students are assessed using the following basic scale -

IE INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE	1 ATTEMPTING STANDARD	2 APPROACHING STANDARD	3 MEETING STANDARD	4 EXCEEDING STANDARD
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A note about performances:

One of the things which sets this class apart from many others are the concerts and performances we present throughout the year. If a student misses a performance, they cannot simply make it up the next day. Additionally, they are not the only one performing. Each member of the ensemble depends on the other to make the concert a success. **There is no substitute for a concert performance.** Students who are not present at a concert and who do not provide written notice one week in advance will be considered **unexcused** and will not be allowed to make up the full credit of the performance. Students who inform the director of their absence will need to **perform a musical excerpt** as well as complete a **written assignment** to receive full credit for the missed performance. This policy is in place to make sure that everyone's teamwork shines through in our concerts.



Attendance

The TMS Band attendance policy is the same as Toppenish Middle School with the exception of performances and rehearsals. **All performances and after school rehearsals are mandatory.** Students must submit a written notice up to **one week in advance** if they will be unable to attend these functions.

Valid excuses for missing a performance/rehearsal:

- illness
- death in the family
- religious observance
- other situations as deemed necessary

Fundraising/Boosters

Due to limited funding, we are not always able to do everything we would like to within our school's budget. For our band to take trips and perform at festivals, we need to raise extra money. Students who would like to participate in our trips will also need to help us raise the money for those opportunities.

Student Leadership

In the Toppenish Middle School Band, leadership is an integral part of our success, both for individual students and for our ensembles as a whole. While we expect each student to be exemplary in their actions at school, we also have students who provide guidance and direction for our performing groups. Each year, section leaders will be appointed by the director to help individuals on their instrument.