



# SPRINGFIELD CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

## 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Band Handbook

Welcome to one of the most exciting experiences in which you can be a part: THE BAND! Now, more than ever, research is available to support and justify why we participate in this demanding, yet rewarding, activity of music. Researchers have concluded that the study of music helps with spatial reasoning, test-taking skills, social skills, emotional development, leadership training, group interaction skills, aesthetic perception, discipline...the list goes on! Why wouldn't you want to be involved in a successful band program like the one here at the Springfield Catholic Schools? Here, the ultimate goal is a lifelong understanding and appreciation for quality music and music-making!

I believe strongly in music education, and am excited to be a part of such a comprehensive program like the one in the Springfield Catholic Schools. This handbook serves the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade bands at St. Agnes, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, and Immaculate Conception Schools. That's nine different classes, but each class will be learning the same material alongside the others of their grade level to create a sense of community across the school system.

All students in band, returning or new, should read the information in this handbook and return the signature page at the bottom. Many questions can be answered by consulting this handbook and I will make sure that I address any issues that arise throughout the year, as needed. Since this handbook contains such important information, I ask that everybody please read the entire handbook, then sign the appropriate portion in the back and return it to me on the date that is announced to your class and school.

I understand that your families have busy lives, and to ensure that we have proper communication, please refer to my website for important information. On the website, you can find additional contact information for me, as well as my daily schedule. If you ever have any questions, or need to communicate directly with me, I am available through phone or email. Please contact me if you have problems or questions. I am looking forward to being your band director this year, and we will have a great year together!

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### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band**

The purpose of sixth grade band is to introduce band as a music learning opportunity through performance. Students will have the opportunity to select a band instrument. Beginning concepts will be taught, including how to assemble the instrument, how to get good tone from the instrument, how to read music on the staff, and how to build on musicianship skills introduced in the fifth grade recorder class. Sixth grade band students will give performances at two concerts throughout the year.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Band**

Students will continue working on the fundamentals of instrumental music, increasing playing skills, expanding note ranges and rhythmic knowledge, as well as learning to play with more musical expression. As seventh graders, students will have the opportunity to audition for and be nominated to represent our schools in the South Central Music Educators Honor Band in the fall. Seventh grade band students will perform at two concerts throughout the year

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band**

Students will continue their musical growth through a more intense study of notes, rhythms, and scales. The students will be exposed to a wider range of music to enhance their musical expression and abilities. As eighth graders, students will again have the opportunity to audition for the South Central Music Educators Honor Band in the fall. Eighth grade band students will perform at two concerts throughout the year.

## **CLASSROOM POLICIES and PROCEDURES**

### **The Band Rehearsal Area**

The band room, stage, and storage areas must be kept clean and organized at all times. Make sure all equipment and music is stored away properly after every rehearsal. An orderly room helps prevent accidents. Please take care of chairs, stands, and other band equipment as if it were your own. If you damage equipment, you will be responsible for replacing it. A good guideline is to leave the room in better shape than you found it—it is far easier for a group of people to keep the room in good order than for one person to clean up after the group!

**Daily Procedures** create a safe and productive learning environment and prohibit the interference of the learning/teaching process. Efficiency is a must!

**Entering the room:** BE ON TIME! Roll will be taken promptly when class begins. Enter quietly, get your instrument out, sit down and get set for the rehearsal. No playing of instruments until we play as an entire group.

**Announcements:** Announcements and reminders will be made at the beginning of class, after we have warmed up as a band. Questions will be answered at this time.

**Daily Participation:** students must have all necessary items for class. They should demonstrate a positive attitude and be an active participant in class.

**Rehearsal:** Display correct posture, instrument position and embouchure. If you need to get up for any reason, raise your hand and receive permission; do not wander around the room without permission. Absolutely no talking or playing of instruments while the teacher is working

**Stop When the Director Stops:** A good band will stop immediately and listen for instructions. This saves time, and allows for maximum efficiency!

**NO FOOD or DRINK in the classroom. NO GUM!**

## Consequences

Students who disrupt the classroom environment will receive a strike. Students will be made aware when they receive a strike on the day that the offense was made. Strikes will also “reset” at the end of a semester. The breakdown/consequences of strikes will be as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Strike: The first strike will serve as a warning to the student

2<sup>nd</sup> Strike: The second strike will warrant communication home with parents

3<sup>rd</sup> Strike: The third strike will warrant an immediate office referral

Should a student accrue more than 3 strikes in a semester, the situation will be handled on a case by case basis and may include a conference with parents, other teachers and principals.

## Required Material

In order for our band classes to perform at the highest possible level, it is essential that all students bring the following materials to band class on a daily basis:

1. Band Instrument in proper working condition
2. Appropriate care supplies for your instrument (reeds, valve oil, mallets, etc.)
3. Required Music Book (see the supply list, or check the website for your class)
4. Other sheet music and handouts
5. Folder (oversized folders that hold the books will be provided for each student, if you wish)
6. Pencil (no ink pens, please)

## Performances

Band is a cooperative learning environment, and each student is important to the educational process; band is a team. Attendance at ALL performances is required, as the group and sound is not complete without every member. Our concerts are the culmination of what has been worked on during class, and because every student is vital to our group, their performance grade is worth a portion of their grade. An unexcused absence from a concert is worth a **total deduction of 2 letter grades**. I understand that emergencies do happen, so if students must miss a concert, parent contact must happen **before** a concert, through phone or email. I am working to schedule concert dates, and will announce them well in advance to avoid as many conflicts as possible.

## Grading Procedures

There are three parts to your grade in band: daily grade, playing quizzes, and concert performances.

### Daily Grade 30%

This is the grade for your daily rehearsal participation. If you come to class on time with everything you need and make a good effort in class and contribute to the progress of rehearsal, you will get all of your points for points for the day. If a student earns a strike, the participation score for that day will be “0.”

### Quizzes 40%

There will be a series of playing quizzes and the occasional written test to be completed for each quarter and should be submitted by the given date. Students will be graded based on the attached rubric. The quizzes will cover material that we are working on in class, and all quiz material will be given to students in advance. Students are allowed, and encouraged to work ahead if they feel that they can complete a future quiz. Quizzes must be recorded and sent to Mr. Pace by the end of the day on the due date. Quizzes should be emailed to [dpac@scspk12.org](mailto:dpac@scspk12.org). Absolutely no late quizzes will be accepted for the reason that quizzes will be assigned well in advance. Since the quizzes will not be heard during class time and are assigned as “homework,” students should practice their quiz until they are comfortable enough to record the entire thing. Multiple recordings may be made, but only the best one should be submitted for grading. If more than one quiz is submitted for grading, I will grade the first one that I receive. *Practice the quiz until you feel absolutely confident and comfortable that you have submitted your best playing!*

### Concert Performances 30%

Performances are a vital way of displaying students’ learned abilities and talents. Each student is vital to the Springfield Catholic Bands, and is needed at every performance. All concert performances are **required** and are 30% of your final grade. **Director must receive written notice two weeks before a concert if you are unable to attend. If no notice is given, the result will be a “0” for the concert grade.** Emergencies will be considered on an individual basis. Poor planning is not considered an excused absence. Students with excused absences will receive 70% of the concert grade, and the other 30% can be made up with an alternative assignment at a later time. No make up work turned in for an excused absence will result in a 70% grade for the concert. Students with unexcused absences will receive a 0% concert grade, no exceptions.

**\*\*\*Please Note:** Quarters where there is no concert, the percentages will change to be Daily Grade 43% of the grade and Quizzes 57% of the grade

|   | Exemplary<br>4 Points  | Outstanding<br>3 Points  | Developing<br>2 Points  | Poor<br>1 Point  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Note Accuracy</b><br>Do you play correct notes?                      | Correct notes are played consistently throughout the selection, including the key signature notes        | Correct notes are mostly played, but a few are missed  | Notes are inconsistent and the selection does not sound as it should                              | Many notes are missed, or key signature is ignored completely                          |
| <b>Rhythm Accuracy</b><br>Do you play the notes at the right time?      | Rhythms are played correctly throughout the entire music   | Most notes are played in time, but there are a few inaccuracies                                | Many rhythms are missed or one specific rhythm is consistently missed while others may be correct | Rhythms are not usually played correctly and notes are rarely played at the right time |
| <b>Tone Quality</b><br>Do sound good for your instrument?               | The sound is characteristic of the instrument during the music   | Sound is good most of the time, but a few notes are performed without good tone                | Tone is unclear, or inconsistently sounds with a characteristic sound                             | Sound quality is far from how the instrument should sound                              |
| <b>Tempo</b><br>Do you play fast or slow enough?                        | Tempo is steady and appropriate for the music  | Tempo is not steady, or the tempo selected is slightly too fast or too slow for the music      | Tempo varies and may affect how rhythms are performed   | Tempo performed is drastically different from marked, or rarely holds steady           |
| <b>Articulation</b><br>Do you start the notes with your tongue or slur? | Articulation is consistently performed as written throughout the music                                   | Articulation is not always performed as written, or different articulations are not emphasized | There are inconsistencies in the articulations used, or articulation is unclear                   | Incorrect articulation is used, or articulation is ignored                             |
| <b>Dynamics</b><br>Do you play loud and soft when you should?           | Dynamics are always at an appropriate level and change when indicated by the music                       | Dynamics are not contrasted enough to be effective enough                                      | Dynamic change is hardly present and needs to be emphasized to make a contrast                    | Incorrect dynamics are used, or ignored completely                                     |
| <b>Breathing/Phrasing</b><br>Do you breathe in the correct places?      | Breaths are taken at appropriate times during the piece, whether written or interpreted breaths are used | Breaths are usually taken at the right time, but a few breaths are taken in an incorrect place | Many breaths taken in the wrong places, or running out of breath before the next one is taken     | Breaths are often taken in the incorrect places in the music                           |

## **Some Final Thoughts:**

What we are trying to do for the student:

The overall goal of the band is the growth of students through music experiences. We provide a band study program that will teach your child:

- To enjoy working with other students toward a common goal
- To experience the joy of performing music with others and for an audience
- To develop self-discipline
- To develop a means to express themselves creatively through music
- To develop a desire to listen to a variety of music
- To develop individual talents for social life at school, home and in the community

Student growth through music will be gained by learning to:

- Perform a band instrument in the correct manner
- Observe and analyze the performance of others
- Develop a critical musical ear
- Develop a rhythmic and melodic feeling
- Perform individually at home, at school and in the community

How parents can help their child:

- Arrange a regular time and a quiet place for them to practice
- Help with practice as much as possible by counting, learning along, etc.
- Assist the child in keeping a daily account of minutes practiced
- Keep the instrument in good repair with extra reeds, oils, etc.
- Remind the child that a musical instrument is not a toy, but rather a finely crafted device which requires careful handling and care
- Encourage your child to play for others (home, church, clubs, etc.)
- See that the instrument and music come to school and home again
- Encourage, encourage, encourage!

Students should practice a minimum of 15 minutes a day, although 30 minutes a day would be even better! Research has shown that daily practice in smaller increments is more beneficial than irregular practice at longer increments. Practice a little bit each day! Without regular practice, instructional time is wasted, as is the parents' investment in the band instrument.

**Parent-Student Consent Form**

*Please sign and return this page. Keep the rest of the packet in case you need to look over the handbook at any point this year.*

We acknowledge that we have read the Springfield Catholic Band Handbook and that we have checked the dates and accept the policies listed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**Please indicated the student's t-shirt size by circling one below**

Youth Small

Youth Medium

Youth Large

Adult Small

Adult Medium

Adult Large