

# BLOOMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL BANDS



OFFICIAL  
BAND HANDBOOK  
2010-2011

## **AN OPEN LETTER TO BAND PARENTS**

Dear Parents,

Thank you for reading this handbook, for your support of its contents, and especially for the opportunity to work with your sons and daughters! Our organization can reach its potential only if we have your active support. Parental involvement and interest in their child's musical growth can be the single most important factor in their total musical education. Through your actions, you can show your child that you care about his/her musical development.

Students are learning more in the Band Hall than simply how to blow a horn or beat a drum. They are developing 'life skills' such as discipline, teamwork, responsibility, self-confidence, social skills, and critical thinking skills. It is the Directors' goal to help each student develop in these areas, and we know that only by working with you, the parents, as a team, will we be successful.

There are several ways in which you can provide support and encouragement for your child: attend performances, encourage home practice, and provide private lessons. Assisting your son or daughter in meeting responsibilities provides incentives for him or her to do well. In addition, it will improve the quality of the Band Program. It is no secret that the success of our Band Program is due in part to the tremendous support of the parents. We hope that you will enjoy being part of our organization!

Sincerely,

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# Bloomington High School Bands

For decades the Band Program at Bloomington High School has produced outstanding performances and trained musicians to be able to perform not only in school music groups, but in college ensembles and a variety of other venues outside of the academic environment. We are proud of the musicians who have been members of the bands through the years, many of whom have gone on to performing in college bands and even into professional musical careers. Whether a student chooses a career in music or not, he or she will have the tools to make music a satisfying part of life. Our students learn more than just how to play an instrument in an acceptable fashion – they learn about music history, music theory and composition, and the artistry of interpretation that is necessary to communicate effectively with an audience.

The key to our success is *daily incremental achievement*. There are no “quick fixes” in music training – each performer needs to spend some time each day honing skills and learning and reinforcing concepts. We have designed our activities so that our students work toward goals every day. While the daily change may not be large, the results certainly are, and performers learn how to approach music on their own as they grow in our bands. It is our hope that each band member elects to remain in the program for all four years of high school. The curriculum is designed so that students who do so will learn new and interesting things each year, while always keeping an emphasis on the basics of fine performance. Some areas of the curriculum are required so the student receives a solid grounding in the fundamentals, and others allow the student to make his or her own choices based on personal interest.

Welcome to YOUR band!

Simply stated, this is *your* band. You are the integral members of this team. You are the people that will shape this program in the coming years. We will be exactly as strong an organization as you want to be. If you choose to put in the effort, you will find great success as a member of this band, and we will find the same successes as a group. With that choice comes the opportunity to grow within a family, to create life-long friendships, and to develop as both a musician and an expressive human being in our society.

## PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to help you understand the policies, complexities and concepts of a very large and proud organization. We hope it will be used to answer questions and define the boundaries that are important in keeping the Bloomington High School Band an efficient organization. If utilized properly, the concepts of responsibility, teamwork and good citizenship will develop. If you need information that does not appear here, please ask the Directors. We will try to assist you in whatever way possible. Students and parents are asked to sign an agreement form verifying that they understand and will adhere to the policies contained in this handbook.

## PERFORMING GROUPS

### Marching Band

- The BHS Marching Raiders is the largest performing group as it combines all band members. The band performs at all Varsity football games, various contests, parades and occasional guest appearances.
- Rehearsal Schedule
  - Summer band rehearsals take place in early June, and in late July/Early August. This “band camp” is **required** of all students. Vacations and other camps should be planned accordingly. Substantial conflicts with the band camp may result in dismissal from the band program.
  - Throughout football season, rehearsals will be held outside of school hours. Sectional rehearsals will take place immediately after school until 3:15pm, as announced. Evening rehearsals on the football field will take place every Monday and Thursday night, from 6:00pm until 8:30pm. These rehearsals are **mandatory** for all students (see attendance policy on pg 4).
- All students will be asked to pay a \$50 summer band camp fee (to help pay for the hiring of staff, the purchase of our music and drill, and for a catered meal in the August Camp), and a \$30 uniform cleaning fee (to cover the cost of cleaning, repairs and replacement hangers and garment bags). Additionally, students may be asked to donate plastic cups, lemonade mix, hot dogs, cookies, and so forth for our annual Band Bar-B-Q.
- It is important to note that students deemed unable to perform at the necessary level may lose performance privileges until that performance level is achieved.
- The marching band uses a “doubles” system, in that some students will share a spot and performance obligations with another student. This system is to ensure that the band does not have to march a performance with an empty spot. Students will be assigned to spots by the directors during band camp.

### Wind Symphony and Concert Band

- Membership is determined by audition and overall performance history.
- These Ensembles perform at least three concerts during the year.
- Additional performances include one or more festivals and occasional concerts for the Junior High and Elementary Schools. All performances, including festivals, are **required** (see attendance policy on page 4).
- Members are strongly encouraged to participate in All-Region tryouts, Solo and Ensemble Contests and private study.

## **Jazz Program**

- The Jazz Ensemble shall perform classic and progressive styles of jazz music, and emphasize improvisation on the students' instrument.
- Membership in the Band Program is required for anyone interested in auditioning for the Jazz Ensemble, with the possible exceptions of piano, bass, and guitar.
- Instrumentation includes alto, tenor and baritone saxophones, trumpets, trombones, piano, bass, drums and auxiliary percussion. There are occasional opportunities for other instruments, including clarinet, flute, and euphonium. Selection of these instruments shall be at the director's discretion.
- There shall be 1-2 rehearsals per week, outside of the school day.
- Performances include, concerts, IWU Jazz Festival, Inner-City Jazz Classic, and other festivals and competitions. All are required for participation in the Jazz Ensemble.
- All Jazz Ensemble participants will be asked to sign a performance contract at the beginning of the year.

## **Pep Band**

- All band students will be expected to perform at three to four home basketball games.
- Sign-up for basketball games will be done in late November, and is based on instrumentation.
- Students may volunteer to be a part of the "core" pep band, performing at ALL home basketball games. These students will receive extra credit towards their quarterly grade, and be invited to an end-of-season pizza party.

## **AUDITIONS**

Auditions are competitive in nature and stress playing proficiency on the students' respective instruments. Priority is given to *characteristic sound, technique, and musicality*. Students must demonstrate the ability to prepare required material as well as sight-read and perform scales by memory. Auditions will be held at the end of Marching Band season to determine seating and ensemble placement for the remainder of the year. Other evaluations and tests held during the year provide students the opportunity to change positions in their sections. Although competition for chair placement is encouraged, the emphasis is stressed on *positive, constructive criticism* and *each individual's improvement at their own pace*. It is the individual that is important, and their development and growth is the primary concern of the Directors, regardless of chair or Band placement.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Due to limited rehearsal time, it is imperative that we make the most of each rehearsal. Each member of the Bloomington Band has an obligation to fellow band members to be at all rehearsals on time, prepared, and with all necessary equipment.

- All band students must abide by the Bloomington High School attendance policies.
- Attendance is required at all rehearsals, sectionals, and performances, including summer band camps.

- Absences and tardies will be excused in the following cases:
  - Medical emergency or personal injury
    - If you are in school on the day of or preceding the event, you are expected to be in attendance. Absence contrary to this requirement will require a doctor's note.
  - Death in the family
  - Other circumstances previously approved by the directors
- Examples of unexcused absences and tardies include but are not limited to:
  - Work
  - Over-sleeping
  - Transportation not arranged
  - Anything deemed unexcused by the Assistant Principals
- All anticipated absences and tardies are to be reported by the parents in writing to the Directors. A form is available in the Band Directors' office and on the band website. Email notification will only be accepted when followed by the submission of the written form.
- Notification in writing must be made to the Director for any anticipated absence:
  - Rehearsals/Sectionals – at least one week in advance
  - Performances – prior to the start of the season (marching season, concert season, etc.)
  - Also, in all cases of excused absence, time must be served in work or assignment related to or equal to the time spent by band members at the activity. Tasks will be assigned by the band director and will be scheduled at the director's convenience. Excused absence does not guarantee that full credit for the performance will be given.
- Unexcused absences and tardies from rehearsals may result in but are not limited to:
  - Grade reduction
  - Make-up assignments
  - Loss of performance status
  - Expulsion from the Band Program

***An automatic "F" for the 9-week grading period will be received for any unexcused absence from a performance.***

***Please note that this "F" becomes the entire grade for the 9-week grading period, and supersedes all other components of the grade.***

## ATHLETIC CONFLICTS

Students at Bloomington High School are encouraged to participate in school-sponsored sports teams. This will, however, create schedule conflicts with the band calendar. Students should note that band is a co-curricular class and that they receive a grade for successful completion of the course requirements. Band is as much of a team sport as any other athletic club, and the entire team is negatively affected by an individual's absence. Students and parents should take the time early in the summer to examine the schedules of both band and their sport to identify any potential scheduling conflicts. When a conflict is identified, band directors and coaches should be notified immediately so that solutions can be found. When a sporting match conflicts with a band rehearsal, students should attend the sporting match. In the spirit of shared time between activities, when practices or matches conflict with performances, priority should be given to band performance. If a student cannot attend all competitions, that student may be doubled with another band member in their drill spot. Parents and students should also note that no absences will be automatically

excused for athletic participation. Students must take the time and planning necessary to make sure the directors are informed of conflicts prior to the limits established in the attendance policy (page 5).

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

It is a privilege to be part of extracurricular activities and the privilege to participate as a Bloomington High School Band member will be denied if students act inappropriately. We strongly feel that Bloomington High School Band members should be leaders and role models for our younger students. Bloomington Band members *will* adhere to the BHS Code of Conduct at all times.

- Band members are encouraged to cultivate an attitude of good discipline during rehearsals. Talking, disturbances, and inattention show a lack of interest and respect to the Band and will not be tolerated.
- Band members serve as goodwill ambassadors for the school. Polite and courteous behavior is a credit to the band organization, to the school, to the parents and to band members themselves.
- Since a portion of the Marching Band activity is somewhat militaristic, it is expected that students be aggressive in rehearsing and performing the marching fundamentals. When at “attention”, there should be no variation from the expected mental and physical attitude.
- Loud and boisterous activity by band members when in public is not in the best interest of the Band’s image.
- Food, gum, or drink (with the exception of water) is never permitted during rehearsal or performance.
- The use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is strictly forbidden.
- Public displays of affection will not be permitted in the Band Hall, on buses, or at official band functions.
- Cell phone usage during rehearsals, performances or other instances that require students’ full attention is unwelcome and inappropriate.
- Inappropriate appearance will not be allowed.
- Any infraction of conduct, attitude, or responsibility will be dealt with in one or more of the following manners:
  - Detention (to be served within two days of issuance)
  - Conference with student
  - Conference with parents
  - Conference with Assistant Principal
  - Probationary contract
  - Expulsion from Band Program
- Respect for school property, including instruments, uniforms and facilities, must be displayed at all times. Students causing damage to school property in any way shall be monetarily responsible for all damage, and shall be referred to the BHS Assistant Principals for immediate discipline.
- Anyone suspended from Band or from school for improper conduct, including alcohol or drug abuse at any time, on- or off-campus, will be held back from any trip or extra-curricular activity.
  - If a student has made a deposit toward a trip and subsequently becomes ineligible, the deposit will not be returned if the ineligibility should occur after the final payment deadline. Cancellation penalties as specified for the trip will apply in all cases.

- The school and BHS Code of Conduct will be in effect on any school-sponsored activity or trip. Any inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. If any problems occur, the parents will be notified and the student will be returned home immediately. The parents will assume responsibility for the cost, if any, incurred for return transportation or damages.

## **REHEARSAL PROCEDURES**

- Every band member must bring instruments, music, dot books, drill, pencils and proper equipment to every rehearsal or performance.
- At all marching band and pep band rehearsals and performance events, students must scan in using their barcodes and the official scanner prior to the start of that event. Students that scan in after the start of rehearsal will be noted as tardy by the scanner. This is the official method of attendance recording for the band department. Students will be issued a barcode sticker at the beginning of the year and must have their barcode with them at all band functions. Replacement barcodes may be purchased for \$1.00.
- Instrument warm-up for Concert Band, including tuning, should be done **prior to the start of the rehearsal**. A formal warm-up will then be executed together as an ensemble under the direction of the director or the drum major.
- There is to be no talking during rehearsals. Subdued talking is permitted with the director's permission when the director leaves the podium. Talking should cease when the director stands on the podium.
- Every student should be seated (or standing in formation in Marching Band rehearsals) at the time designated by the director, or the student will be marked **tardy**.
- Posture is of the utmost importance. Students should avoid crossed legs or ankles and slumping when seated in chairs.
- The whiteboard should be read when entering the room. Music should be placed in the proper order according to the instructions on the whiteboard.
  - During marching season, the equipment and materials needed for each rehearsal will be listed on the whiteboard.
  - During concert season, music will be listed on the board in the order it will be rehearsed. Music should be placed in order on the music stand before the rehearsal begins.
  - Students are not allowed to write anything on the whiteboard or add anything to the bulletin board without permission. Posted information should never be removed from the bulletin board.
- Music folders, instruments, and equipment should be kept in their proper storage places when not in use.
- Books and personal belongings should not be left in the band room. All trash should be thrown into the waste containers. Students may not bring school books to their seats. Coats and school books are not to be left in instrument lockers. Failure to adhere to this rule could result in losing the privilege of using a locker.

## GRADING POLICY

Students will receive one credit per year. Grades are determined by the following criteria:

- Attendance at rehearsals and performances (see attendance policy and performing groups' regulations)
- Playing exams
- Music memorization (field show, school song, National Anthem, others as needed)
- Marching tests
- Written assignments and exams
- Daily effort and attitude
- Preparation for class (necessary materials, practice)

**An automatic "F" for the 9-week grading period will be received for UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FROM A PERFORMANCE**

## CARE OF BAND HALL

- Loud talking, shouting or horseplay is not allowed in the Band Hall.
- Keep instruments in cases with latches closed in assigned slot when not in use.
- Practice rooms are for practice, recording assignments, playoffs, or private lessons only.
- Instrument slots must be kept clean. Items not properly stored may be discarded at the Director's discretion.
- All concert and marching folders should be kept neatly in the appropriate cabinet/locker. Music and folders should not be left on the music stand.
- All storage rooms are to be considered off-limits. Access to these spaces is allowed only with a staff member present.
- Personal items are not to be stored in the Library, offices, practice rooms, or instrument storage areas. The Band Department assumes no responsibility for personal items stored in the Band Hall.
- Books and personal belongings should not be left in the band room. All trash should be thrown into the waste containers. Students may not bring school books to their seats. Coats and school books are not to be left in instrument lockers. Failure to adhere to this rule could result in losing the privilege of using a locker.
- Band Hall chairs and stands are not to be removed from the room unless requested by a Director.
- The Band Library is off-limits to all band members, except Librarians and Staff, and then only to conduct business approved by the Directors.
- No one is to use the audio/visual equipment without permission.

- Students should not enter the band offices without permission. The telephone may be used with a director's permission.
- Non-band students are not allowed access to band lockers, storage rooms or equipment. Those students that allow non-band members into the band hall assume responsibility for their guests.
- Any equipment issued to a student is the responsibility of that student, including repair and replacement costs.

## **CARE OF MUSIC**

- Always use pencil - never ink - when marking music. All markings, except permanent corrections, must be erased before music is turned in.
- Keep a pencil in your music folders at all times.
- You will be charged for replacing lost/damaged music and folders. If individual parts to a particular piece are not available for replacement, students will be responsible for replacing the band set of that piece. Parts range in cost from \$5.00 to \$10.00; Sets range in cost from \$65.00 to \$350.00.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

The Bloomington High School Band uniform is one that should be worn with pride. Participation in the program and the use of the uniform that comes with it is a privilege. Students must have on the proper attire in order to participate.

- Uniforms will usually be assigned during Summer Band. It is the student's responsibility to replace any uniform part that is lost or damaged.
  - Band members will be issued:
    - Marching coat (\$120)
    - Bib pants (\$60)
    - Baldric (\$50)
    - Pair of gauntlets (\$35)
    - Hat (\$28)
    - One pair of black gloves (except percussionists) (\$2)
    - Band show t-shirt (\$15)
    - Garment Bag (\$5)
  - It is the responsibility of each band member to purchase the following:
    - A pair of black marching shoes and black socks
    - Purple Band Polo Shirt (summer uniform)
    - Khaki shorts (summer uniform)
    - A pair of white marching shoes and white socks (summer uniform)

## WEARING THE UNIFORM

- HAT -- The hat should be worn straight on top of the head with the strap snug under the chin. Hair extending below the collar will be worn inside the hat. Plumes will be issued immediately before each marching performance and collected immediately following.
- MARCHING COAT -- The coat and overlay should be worn completely fastened at all times when in public unless otherwise specified by the Directors. The band t-shirt is to be worn under the uniform coat and overlay, allowing the Band to have a uniform appearance if the coats are removed during hot weather.
- PANTS -- The bottom of the hem should be 1" to 1 1/2" from the ground when wearing band shoes and properly adjusted suspenders.
  - Note: Please do not wear jeans under band pants. Nylon shorts or comparable are acceptable for warm weather; long johns or thermals are acceptable for cold weather.
- SHOES -- Shoes are to be kept clean and polished. Only black shoes and socks are to be worn with the marching uniform and white shoes and socks are to be worn with the summer uniform.

## UNIFORM DECORUM

- There will be no variations from the proper wearing of the uniform unless specified by the Directors. Sunglasses, other hats, etc., are not appropriate.
- Cleaning of the uniform will be done on a regular basis by the Band Aides Uniform Committee. The uniform maintenance fee (\$30) will cover the necessary cleaning and repair of normal uniform wear.
- The uniform **MUST** be hung up immediately after each performance, with careful attention given to lining up hems, folding in shoulder wings, and placement of baldric and gauntlets. Uniforms must be returned to the uniform committee after every performance. *YOU MAY NOT LEAVE WITHOUT CHECKING IN YOUR UNIFORM WITH THE COMMITTEE.*
- Memorize your uniform numbers. Do not exchange parts of your uniform with another band member.
- Jewelry of any kind is not permitted. Piercings that cannot be removed must be completely covered by a bandage.
- Students will not be allowed to perform with the Band or Color Guard or wear the uniform if they have any color hair that is not a natural, human color (ex: green, blue, purple, etc).
- If you lose, damage, or have any problem with your uniform, see a Director as soon as possible.
- Uniforms shall be inspected prior to every performance. Students not wearing the uniform correctly may be removed from the performance, fined, or subject to a lowered grade.
- Additional gloves may be purchased from the Band Aides or Directors for \$3.00
- NO UNIFORM PARTS WILL BE ISSUED PRIOR TO INSPECTIONS.
- Uniform parts left in the Band Hall after performances will be confiscated.

# GAME NIGHT ROUTINE

## Arrival

- Arrive on or before the designated time to allow for changing into the band uniform.
- Students must scan in using their barcode.

## Inspection

- Band members will be inspected for the following:
  - Proper wear, fit and condition of uniform (see Uniform Policy)
  - Condition of equipment
    - Brass instruments: horns polished, valves and slides working freely, mouthpiece clean, etc.
    - Woodwinds: reeds clean and without flaws, instrument clean, good pads, springs, corks, etc.
    - Percussion: drum heads clean, drum shells polished, cymbals polished, sticks and mallets properly taped and in good condition

## Music

- Music folder must be in good condition, properly labeled, and contain all necessary music (pep tunes, school song, etc). Folders are to be collected by section leaders to be brought to the stands

## Arrival at Game Site

- Silently “fall in” in assigned positions.
- Maintain “attention” or “at rest” as instructed until pregame entry begins.
- Perform School Song and National Anthem by memory.

## During Game

- There will be no variations from the proper wearing of the uniform.
- No food, drink or gum is allowed while the Band is in the bleachers, except at times designated by the Directors.
- Cellular telephone usage of any kind is prohibited.
- Do not play your instrument unless the entire band is performing. Percussion is to play only with full band, with cheerleaders, or during drum features authorized by the Directors.
- Sit with your section, and cheer to support our Raiders Football team.
- Non-band members are not allowed to sit in the band’s section of the bleachers at any time (family included)

## Half-time

- File orderly and silently from the stands to the assembly point before the performance. Always move single file. Do not play instruments unless told to do so by the Directors.
- When waiting to take the field, maintain the strictest possible “attention” or “at rest” as instructed.

## Third Quarter

- When released, students may take a brief break during the first part of the third quarter.
- There will be no variations in the proper wearing of the uniform.
- Listen carefully for instructions on when to be back in the stands ready to play.
- It is recommended that instruments not be left in the bleachers. Do not risk damage to your instrument!

## **Post-Game**

- File orderly and silently from the stands to the assembly point before the performance. Always move single file. Do not play instruments unless told to do so by the Directors.
- Continue to cheer and support the team.
- Perform the School Song at the conclusion of the game.
- March back to the Band Hall in proper formation.
- Put away instruments, neatly hang up uniform and check out with the Uniform Committee.

## **BUS PROCEDURES**

- When buses are provided, all performers will ride the bus both going to and coming from the event. Exceptions to this rule require written personal requests by the parents prior to the event. Even then, the final decision is left to the Director and Principal.
- Students may be assigned to a specific bus prior to departure. Riding on a bus other than the one to which you are assigned is not permitted. Students are required to obey the driver and chaperones in charge.
- District 87 and Illinois Central School Bus Company prohibit loud talking, foul or abusive language, standing in aisles, or sitting on the backs of seats while on buses. Hands, feet, arms, legs and head must remain inside the bus.
- No food or drink is allowed on buses unless approved by the Directors.
- Public displays of affection are not permitted on the bus.
- Instruments and other equipment will be carried on the bus and/or trailers. A loading crew will be designated for each trip and is responsible for loading the equipment which is placed next to the bus or trailer. The crew is not responsible for any equipment not placed in the loading area. In short, every Band member is responsible for his/her own instrument and equipment.
- The rear exit is for an emergency or to load items in the rear seats of the bus. All students shall enter and exit through the front door for their safety.

## **TRAVEL**

The Bloomington High School Band takes a major trip every other school year. The trips last anywhere from five to seven days. The student cost is usually between \$800 and \$1200, and is entirely the responsibility of the student. There are many incredible performance opportunities throughout the country for bands who qualify and are accepted to perform. The Bloomington Band Program takes great pride in having performed in the National Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C., the Pentagon, the Lincoln Memorial, the National Capitol, the Indianapolis 500 Festival Parade, the Azalea Festival Parade in Richmond, Virginia, the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, Florida, Universal Studios, and Disney's EPCOT Center, Disney's Hollywood Studios and the Magic Kingdom.

The band Staff designs each trip to provide excellent performance opportunities, as well as being educational in nature.

Students will have many opportunities to earn money to help pay for their trips (refer to the section on Fundraising).

The major trips are not required of band members, but strongly encouraged. These trips are a privilege, and not a right of membership. Students whose band, school or other behaviors raise legitimate concerns about their behavior on the trip will not be permitted to go. Furthermore, any student suspended from school for any reason immediately forfeits their participation in that year's trip.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Several fundraising projects are done each year in which the student's profit goes directly into an account for his/her trip. These projects may include an annual Kringles sale in August, evergreen wreath sale in October, cheesecake sales in April, and various smaller projects throughout the year. None of these activities are required, but most students and parents participate in these to help earn their money for a trip. Parents can certainly choose to pay for the student's trip and not participate in fundraising. The students' trip accounts are managed by the BHS Band Aides Treasurer and BHS Band Directors. Access to trip account records will be available on the Band's Online Management system, [www.charmsmusic.com](http://www.charmsmusic.com). Money earned through fundraising that is not used by the student before graduation will be deposited into the general trip fund.

## **THE BHS BAND AIDES**

The BHS Band Aides is the parent support group for the Bloomington High School Band Program. The Band Aides provide support both financially and physically, and are the primary means of active involvement in students' activities. In addition to providing funds for equipment, scholarships, and payment of additional staff, the Band Aides provide support through volunteering to help with uniforms, chaperoning trips, loading and unloading equipment, supervising football games, coordinating fundraisers, sewing flags...the list goes on and on! In short, this band program cannot be successful without the dedication and support of our band parents! All parents and guardians are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings (the first Tuesday of every month, 7:00pm, in the BHS Band Hall), and be a part of the action! We thank you in advance for your assistance!

## **THE CHARMS MUSIC ONLINE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The BHS Band Program will work exclusively with the Charms Online Management System for all communication, scheduling, inventory, billing, and documentation. It is extremely important that students and parents logon to [www.charmsmusic.com](http://www.charmsmusic.com) on a weekly basis to check for announcements and other pertinent information. This website will also allow students and parents to track what instruments and uniforms students have been issued, update and pay fees, receive handouts, and remain in constant contact. The school code is **“bloomhsband”** and the student password is **your student’s first initial and last name** (*lower case, no space*). It is recommended that you change this password after your initial login, and occasionally thereafter for security purposes. If you do not have regular access to the internet and email, it is important for you to contact the Directors so they know to contact you by other means. Please note that the system tracks student and parent logins to ensure that everyone is receiving the necessary information.

## **THE BAND WEBSITE**

In addition to the Charms Online Music Management System, the band hosts an official website at [www.bhs87.org/band](http://www.bhs87.org/band). The website will contain news releases, photos, recordings, videos, staff bios, and reminder schedules; all for public use (you are encouraged to submit your digital photos to Mr. Chernick for posting on the band website). Please remember that in addition to the BHS Band website, the Charms Online Music Management System will be the primary method of communication of important announcements and schedules. Students’ names and personal information will not be used on the public domain website.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

Although not required, it is strongly recommended that all students take private lessons from qualified teachers. Students benefit greatly from one-on-one instruction from a specialist on his or her instrument. Lessons are tailored to the individual student's strengths and weaknesses. Our experience has shown that students who study privately progress at a much faster rate than those who choose not to study privately. For a list of qualified teachers, please contact the Directors, visit the music department of a local university, or contact a local music dealer.

## **ILLINOIS MUSIC EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION (IMEA)**

### **District Band**

Students in the BHS Band Program have the opportunity to audition to be in the IMEA District Band. This program brings the top performers from the region together to perform challenging music with a distinguished conductor. Auditions are held for the IMEA District Band in October on Columbus Day. If selected, students perform at the District Festival in November, held on the Illinois State University campus. This is an all-day event, culminating with an evening concert performance.

### **All-State Band**

Junior and Senior students who place the highest at the District Band level may then qualify to perform with the All-State Bands. In this event, the top students of each of the nine districts in the state are selected to perform at the All-State Music Conference in January, held in Peoria. Being selected to perform in one of the All-State Bands or Orchestras is the highest honor a band student can achieve in the State of Illinois.

## **IHSA SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST**

The IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest is held on the first Saturday in March. Any student in grades 9-12 may participate. It is highly encouraged that students participate in a solo or ensemble event. Students grow musically by performing alone or in small groups outside of the larger band. The preparation for and performance at contest greatly enhances this growth. Participants in the contest perform for reputable judges, and are given feedback, scores and medals based on their performance. The BHS Music Department takes great pride in the success of its students at the IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest. Students are asked to pay a nominal fee for registering their solo performance, while the registration fees of ensembles are assisted by the music department (students that cancel after the registration deadline, or fail to show up for a performance shall be assessed a fee by BHS). Also, students performing solos are required to hire a piano accompanist at their own cost. This is an excellent opportunity for all students, and directors and private teachers will assist in the selection of literature and the formation of ensembles, if necessary.

# GUIDE TO THE ART OF PRACTICING

## **When to practice:**

- Approximately the same time every day in 20-30 minute intervals.
- At a time when the student is physically and mentally alert.
- At a time when there will be the least amount of distractions.

Practicing at the same time every day will help establish a set routine. In addition, there are fewer interruptions if both family and friends know that a certain time has been set aside for practicing.

## **Where to practice:**

- In a place as free as possible from TV, phone, stereo, other people, etc.
- In a place that is neither too 'live' or too 'dead' acoustically.
- In a place where the student feels comfortable.

It is important that each student have a comfortable, distraction-free environment in which to learn.

## **What to Practice:**

- Warm-up materials - long tones, slurs, scales, rudiments, etc.
- Band music - band pieces, test material, All-District/Region music, etc.
- Private lesson music - assigned by the private lesson teacher.
- Sight reading - use an etude or song book.
- Student music - play anything for enjoyment.

Practicing at least 30-60 minutes every day is optimum.

## **Equipment:**

- A chair with a straight back and no arms
- A music stand
- A mirror
- A metronome
- A cassette/minidisk/video recorder.

In order for the student to develop good posture, it is important that they be provided with a good chair and music stand. The mirror is used for viewing hand, embouchure and body position. The metronome will develop and reinforce good rhythm and pulse, while the tape recorder will allow the student to hear what he/she really sounds like.

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