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August 9, 2021

Dear Mendive Band Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 Mendive Middle School Band! I am excited to begin a new school year and to teach your child music! Please encourage your child to practice regularly and to play for you often! We hope to cover many critical topics in this letter, please take the time to read through this letter and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

**Grading**

* **40%** - Attending and participating in Concerts/Performances
  + Attendance is required at all performances. The only accepted excusal from a performance is a family emergency. Missing a performance must be communicated with the director as early as possible. If excused, an alternative assignment will be provided. If there is a scheduling conflict you must notify the director as soon as possible. Concert dates will be announced very early before any performance.
* **30%** - Completion of playing tests and pass-offs
  + Playing tests will be performed every week and will be announced regularly. Students will know what the upcoming test will be (always on Thursday/Friday) and should be practicing daily to prepare for each playing test. Students and parents can see what the upcoming playing test is on the Mendive Band website.
  + Pass-offs are recorded assignments that require students to achieve a 100% score. Students are given unlimited attempts to achieve this score throughout the quarter. If, by the end of the quarter, a 100% is not achieved students will be given their highest score from their third attempt.
* **30%** - Completion of materials checks, classwork, and turning in forms.
  + Every day students will need in class;
    - A pencil
    - Accent on Achievement Method Book
    - Instrument
    - Valve oil/reeds & cleaning swabs
    - Any assigned music
    - Music Folder (provided)
* **Behavior Grade** - Attending and participating in class in a respectful manner
  + Respect your peers, your teacher, and yourself by;
    - Being on time for class, rehearsals, performances, etc.
    - Being in your chair with equipment and ready to go when the bell rings.
    - Gum, candy, and treats are to be chewed or eaten out of school grounds. No sports drinks, soda, etc. are allowed in the band hall. ONLY WATER.
    - PENCILS are to be on the music stand with music.
    - Sit up tall in chairs; feet flat on floor, percussion students will stand up to play.
    - Raise your hand to be called on to make comments or to ask questions.
    - Respect, and take care of, ALL school instruments/equipment. Leave all equipment/instruments alone that are not checked out to you.
    - Respect, and take care of, other students’ equipment as well as your own. Do not touch other students’ instruments.
* **Make-up/Absence Work**
  + If a playing test or assignment is missed the student will need to arrange a time with the director to make-up the playing test (for full credit). This can be scheduled for before or after school.

**Course Fee**

Band has a $20 course fee. The fee can be paid for in cash/card at the front office of the school. Students are also able to pay Mr. Overlay directly and will be provided a receipt. This fee contributes to the upkeep required to maintain the band program. Funds will go towards music, equipment (chairs, stands, etc.), instruments (purchasing, repair, maintenance), and other costs associated with keeping our program running at its best! Every dollar collected will be put towards the group to ensure students have access to the best band experience possible. If there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me, I am happy to help!

**Band Instrument Rental/Check-Out Procedures**

* Rental/Purchase options:
  + Rent-to-own from a music store
    - This allows you to rent an instrument with each rental payment going towards purchasing the instrument.  This can result in you owning a high-quality instrument that will last through high school and even into the start of college without having to pay a large sum up front.
  + Renting from a music store
    - Many music stores offer instrument rentals for a monthly fee. See the Mendive Band website for links to many local stores in town.
  + Purchasing an instrument
    - Please Note, if you are purchasing an instrument, it is highly encouraged that you check with Mr. Overlay before purchasing an instrument.  There are many instruments available, especially online, that offer great prices but often the instruments are of such low quality that they do not function properly.  Furthermore, these instruments tend to break frequently and will result in expensive repairs that can cost more than the instrument itself.  To avoid this happening, you are welcome to ask me about the instrument first.  I would never recommend plastic instruments and/or instruments that are of an unnatural color (red, pink, blue, green, etc.).  Remember, you get what you pay for.
  + Renting from Mendive MS
    - Mendive Middle School has a limited supply of instruments for students**. We would like to reserve these instruments for students whose financial circumstances truly prohibit them from renting an instrument.** School instruments will be issued on a first come, first serve basis, and based on availability with priority given to those on Free & Reduced Lunch, as per WCSD policy. Please keep in mind that if you are approved for use of a school instrument that there is a $50 instrument use fee. This fee helps to cover the cost of cleaning/servicing the instruments over summer. Please do not pay for this fee unless you are checked-out a school instrument. The form to request a school instrument can be found on the Mendive Band website.

**Mendive Beginning Band – 6th Grade Beginning Band Camp**

* 6th Grade Beginning Band Camp – One day per instrument to get a strong start on our instruments!
  + Flute – **August 23rd** – 2pm to 3:30pm
  + Oboe/Bassoon - **August 24th** – 2pm to 3:30pm
  + Clarinet/Saxophone – **August 26th** – 2pm to 3:30pm
  + Trumpet/Horn – **August 30th** – 2pm to 3:30pm
  + Trombone/Euphonium/Tuba – **August 31st** – 2pm to 3:30pm
  + Percussion – **September 2nd** – 2pm to 3:30pm

**Practicing**

* Students are expected to practice at least 15 minutes each day.
  + Just like how an athlete progresses by working every day, musicians succeed the same way!
  + It is must better to practice 15 minutes each day then to practice 4 hours one day.
  + Practicing regularly will allow you to be extremely prepared for all playing tests
  + While band is fun, band is best enjoyed when you are playing your instrument well! This is achieved by participating in class and practicing regularly
* Students who greatly enjoy playing their instrument or wish to progress faster should aim for 30 minutes or more each day.
* Breaks during practicing are recommended
* What do I practice?
  + Warm-up (Can be the same as in class)
  + Technique (Scales, tonguing, paradiddles, etc.)
  + Playing Test of the week (See Mendive Band Website)
  + Assigned Music
  + Fun Music (See Mendive Band Website)
* Practice Club
  + The Mendive MS Band Room will be open after school from 2:00pm to 2:45pm every day. Students are absolutely welcome to stay after school to practice.
    - This is very advantageous for:
      * Students who live in an environment where they can’t practice their instrument
      * Percussion students – Access to the instruments in the band room
      * Students who enjoy practicing with friends
* Practice Rooms
  + There are practice rooms available for use after school as well.
  + One student using a room at a time.
  + Must sign-in to use the practice room using Student ID with Mr. Overlay

**Uniforms**

* + All Black Dress Pants
    - Slacks or Dress pants
    - NO jeans/joggers/sweats or etc.
  + All Black Shoes
    - Dress Shoes
    - Beginners Only - If casual shoe, no white trim, logos, or etc.
  + All Black Socks
    - Socks should be long enough to completely cover the ankle when sitting down
  + Band Polo (Provided as part of the band fee)

**Private Lessons**

If your child is seeking an extra challenge, I highly recommend students to take private lessons. This gives students weekly instruction with a professional musician who tailors the lesson to the individual needs of their students. Private lessons are a great way to get a head start for High School and College Band (scholarships are available for band students to play their instrument). Private lessons are also a great way to prepare for Solo & Ensemble as well as Honor Band Auditions. Many private instructors are happy to instruct online lessons to ensure the safety of everyone involved. While this is in no way required, if it is a possibility for you, we highly encourage considering private lessons. Please check with your music instructor if you wish to know more or if you wish to find private instructors.

**Band Required Supplies and Shopping**

[Mendive Band / Supply Information (washoeschools.net)](https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/16972)

**Mendive MS Band Website**

<http://www.washoeschools.net/mendiveband>