



WELCOME

Hello, and welcome to band. We hope you're all as excited as we are to make music.

You have been (or will be) given access to your child's **GOOGLE CLASSROOM**. That's the portal for all assignments and other valuable content. Communication will be housed here. You'll also receive occasional emails throughout the year.

GRADING

The band grade is comprised of two parts, weighed as follows:

- 1) **Classroom Musicianship** = 50%
- 2) **Assignments** = 250%

CLASSROOM MUSICIANSHIP

This encompasses all it means to be a musician outside of performing and includes: punctuality, responsibility, engagement, attitude and effort. Bringing all materials to class consistently is one example of how to earn points toward this grade.

ASSIGNMENTS

Band assignments will either be playing assignments or typed/written assignments. All playing assignments (and some written assignments) will be done using the online platform MusicFirst (MF). This is the \$9 fee that was collected during school registration.



There is a powerful recording feature in MF that can assess the accuracy of a student's pitch and rhythm and give immediate feedback. Playing assignments will be graded as follows:

- 85-100% = 4 (Advanced)
- 70-84% = 3 (Proficient)
- 50-69% = 2 (Basic)
- 0-49% = 1 (Minimal)

In most cases, students will have unlimited playing attempts before submitting an assignment. Also, students may redo assignments.

COVID19 SAFETY FOR BAND

The following requirements will be in place during band class. They are based on recommendations from a study commissioned by a number of performing arts organizations.

FACE COVERINGS (provided) Students will be given a surgical face mask with a slot cut out for the instrument mouthpiece. These will not leave the band room; students will store them with their instrument. A new mask will be given to each student each week. Percussionists will simply wear the mask they come to school with.

BELL COVERS (provided)

Flutes and clarinets will cover the end of the instrument with a snack-sized plastic baggie & rubber band.

All other students (but not percussion) will be given a shower cap to stretch over the bell of the instrument.

These items will be provided each week/as needed, and stored with students' instruments.

"PUPPY PADS" for brass players (provided) These absorbent pads will be used for brass players to empty their spit valves. They will be available as needed.

DISTANCING

Chairs are 6 feet apart. Each student will have their own folder and music; there will be no sharing.

Students will enter and exit the room in staggered fashion to reduce congestion.

All materials (backpacks, instrument cases) will be under/behind students' chairs during class

EACH DAY IN BAND

Students must have their instrument, folder, backpack and Chromebook. When students enter the band room they will:

1. Use the hand sanitizer.
2. Assemble their instrument at their seat.
3. View the agenda in Google Classroom and follow the prompts.

PRACTICING

Practice is essential for all musicians. While not an explicit grade-book item, practicing is implicit in the graded assignments due every other week (through the online platform *MusicFirst*).

REHEARSAL IS NOT PRACTICE. All band students are expected to practice their instrument outside of class. The focus of band class (rehearsal) is musical concepts and *ensemble* skills (playing with a group). This is not the same as practicing your instrument.

WHEN & WHERE?

Setting aside a consistent time and place to practice is necessary. Whether it's right after school, right after your homework, before you play your video games...whatever works best for you.

Students have traditionally enjoyed ample time to practice at school, whether before/after school, during lunch, etc. HOWEVER, this is on hold until further notice as we navigate new COVID-19 safety measures. We urge you to do your best to carve out time to practice at home, whatever that looks like for you.

HOW MUCH?

100 minutes is a good weekly goal. If you practice 5 days a week at least 20 minutes each time, you've reached 100 minutes for the week.

20 minutes of smart practicing is far better than 3 hours of poor practicing. Work on the stuff you can't play, and always play things s-l-o-w-l-y at first. For many of you, counting up the minutes can be a good motivator and help with organization. BUT don't get hung up on the minutes. The point is that you and your instrument are not strangers.

Remember that some of your graded assignments will be playing assignments. Teachers will not keep track of practice minutes, but hopefully the playing assignments will be motivation to do at least some practicing outside of class..

CONCERTS

At the time of writing this syllabus, concerts have been suspended due to COVID-19. We know there will be no fall concert for starters. If and when the status changes, the concert calendar will be shared as well as the concert policy.

SUPPLIES

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to order equipment and supplies such as valve oil and reeds. Breber Music from Elkhorn travels to our school every Thursday morning. Call or e-mail the store to place an order. Of course you are free to shop anywhere (Amazon, etc.).

Students will get recommendations for reeds and other supplies on an individual basis. Please ask. If you are reading this and need reeds in a pinch, saxes and clarinets - go with Rico strength #3.

REPAIRS

Repair forms must first be filled out and are available in the band room or on Geo Breber's website. We'll send your instrument in on a Thursday and it will usually come back in one week. Breber will provide a loaner while your instrument is in the shop.

GEO BREBER MUSIC, INC.
1-800-686-8737
orders@brebermusic.net

PERCUSSIONISTS

All FAMS percussionists must own the items listed below during their time at FAMS. Items #1&2 were obtained in 5th grade band. A percussionist will accumulate items in their stick bag as they advance through school. Each student's bag may vary depending on their level of dedication and interest, however the list below is the minimum requirement.

Geo Breber has predetermined brands/models of the following items for our school and will give you pricing details. Please call or email to order whatever you may need from this list. Items will be delivered to school.

- 1) 1 pair of drum sticks
- 2) 1 pair of hard mallets
- 3) 1 pair of yarn mallets
- 4) 1 stick bag

We rented a percussion kit...now what?

While we have no requirement that you continue renting the kit, you have made it about half way to ownership through your payments. It is ideal that percussionists have a means to practice at home (a drum pad and a bell set). However, students will have access to instruments at