



**2017-2018
BAND HANDBOOK**

www.fowlerband.com

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Preface

This handbook has been written for the Fowler Middle School band members and their parents with the intent of providing information regarding the purpose, procedures, expectations and activities of the band program. **All band students and parents are expected to read the entire handbook carefully to avoid conflicts with the policies stated herein.**

As a member of the Fowler Middle School Band you have the honor and responsibility of participating in an organization with a high standard of excellence and pride.

We are extremely fortunate to have parents, administrators, faculty, and school board members that are committed and dedicated to a quality band program. We look forward to having you as part of the band program!

Fowler Middle School Philosophy of Instrumental Music

A well-rounded education is enhanced by one of the most basic of all studies...the study of **music**. Music develops **self-confidence**. Music gives each student a feeling of **pride** and **accomplishment**. Playing in band teaches students the importance of working with others and helps them develop the **social skills** necessary to be part of a performing organization. Instrumental music engages students in a group activity that allows them to use their free time constructively. Band instills **values**: responsibility, purpose & direction, devotion to duty, spirit of cooperation, and sensitivity to beauty. Not all band students become great musicians, but certainly all become more mature, cooperative, self-disciplined, hard working members of society with an appreciation of the arts. Music is a subject that affects all sides of a student's development. These include the intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual and social aspects of a person.

Pride is an important element of a quality organization. **Pride** is having a desire to succeed in what you do while **respecting** yourself and others around you. It is taking what you do **seriously** while **enjoying** what you do. Pride is a **state of mind**. A person's **quality of life** is in direct proportion to their **commitment to excellence** - whatever their field of endeavor.

Communication

In order to have a successful program good communication between parents and teachers is essential.

The BEST source of information is the band website: www.fowlerband.com

This website is updated almost daily and will always have DETAILED information as to upcoming events, calendars, private lesson teachers contact information, practice cards, fees, etc.

Please check this website often for late breaking announcements and information.

The Band Staff of Fowler MS want to be available to you to answer your questions about band, band events, and/or your child's musical progress. If you have ANY questions or concerns please contact us directly.

We are best reached by email though the band website. Email to Mr. Dunham will always be returned the same day as it is received. We are also available by phone at (469) 633-5070.

Band Descriptions and Expectations

There are several performing groups in the band program at Fowler Middle School. Each group listed below functions as an important part of the entire band program. Bands are divided into five separate groups in order to meet the **individual needs** of each student. Membership in the bands is determined through a year long evaluation of a student's progress, ability, experience level and the May Band Exam. Band exams will be given to all students with the intent of confirming the following year's band placement.

SYMPHONIC BAND

The Symphonic Band is the top-performing group which is made up of the most **advanced** 7th and 8th grade students. Students in this band must be proficient on their instrument and must be willing to commit to regular rehearsal and practice time. The Symphonic Band students will have one **sectional rehearsal** per week (either 7:20-8:15am OR 3:45pm-5:00pm) as well as some extra full band rehearsals throughout the year. Students in this band are **required to participate in ALL** scheduled rehearsals, concerts, pep rallies, and contest's as these are graded events. This includes attendance at evening Fowler football games, clinics, and concerts and contests as listed in the band calendar. **Scheduled clinics are deemed as major band events and count as major test grades.** In addition, each student will be **required** to tryout for the **All Region Band** and participate in the **Solo & Ensemble** contest. It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to check the **band calendar** and incorporate the scheduled events into your family calendar. Please note that due to unexpected district conflicts changes may need to be made to calendar dates. In order to establish and maintain a high level of performance, Symphonic Band students will need to practice **30 to 60 minutes daily** as well as study privately with a professional lesson teacher (Private Lessons). For normal progress, all Band students are required to practice at least 2.5 hours per week, which is to be documented on a practice sheet given to each student at the beginning of each semester.

SYMPHONIC BAND MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WEEKLY PRIVATE LESSON PROGRAM ALL YEAR.

ALL band students in grades 6-8 MUST take their instruments home EVERY DAY or a band detention (before/after school) will be assigned. Symphonic Band students are expected to maintain passing grades in all their class. If students do not pass all classes they will not be eligible to participate in the extra events and activities of the Fowler Band.

HONOR BAND

Honor Band is the second performing group that is made up of **intermediate/advanced** 7th and 8th grade students. Students in this band will have **one section rehearsal** per week (either 7:20-8:15am OR 3:45pm-5:00pm), as well as some extra full band rehearsals throughout the year. Students in this band are **required to participate** in the scheduled rehearsals, concerts, and pep rallies. This includes attendance at evening Fowler football games, clinics, and concerts and contests as listed in the band

calendar as these are graded events. **Scheduled clinics are deemed as major band events and count as major test grades.** It is **required** that the Honor Band students participate in the All Region Band tryouts and all students are **required** to participate in the Solo & Ensemble Contest. It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to check the **band calendar** and incorporate the scheduled events into your family calendar. Please note that due to unexpected district conflicts changes may need to be made to calendar dates. It is **strongly recommended** that the student study privately with a professional lesson teacher at Fowler MS (Private Lessons).

For normal progress, all Honor Band students are required to practice at least 2.5 hours per week, which is to be documented on a practice sheet given to each student at the beginning of each semester. HONOR BAND MEMBERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WEEKLY PRIVATE LESSONS PROGRAM ALL YEAR (It will be difficult, but not impossible, to matriculate to the Symphonic Band without private lessons). **ALL band students in grades 6-8 MUST take their instruments home EVERY DAY** or a band detention (before/after school) will be assigned. Because this band will be going to contest, Honor Band students are expected to maintain passing grades in all their class. If students do not pass all classes they will not be eligible participate in the extra events and activities of the Fowler Band.

CONTEST CONCERT BAND

Contest Concert Band is considered an **intermediate** band made up of 7th & 8th grade students. Students in this band will have **one section rehearsal** per week (either 7:20-8:15am OR 3:45pm-5:00pm), as well as some extra full band rehearsals throughout the year based on the bands competition at contests. Students in this band are **required to participate** in the scheduled rehearsals, scheduled clinics, concerts, and pep rallies. Scheduled clinics are deemed as major band events and count as major test grades. This includes attendance at evening Fowler football games, and Saturday concerts and contests as listed in the band calendar as these are graded events. **Scheduled clinics are deemed as major band events and count as major test grades.** It is **encouraged but not required** that the Concert Band students participate in the All Region Band tryouts and all students are **required** to participate in the Solo & Ensemble Contest. It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to check the **band calendar** and incorporate the scheduled events into your family calendar. Please note that due to unexpected district conflicts changes may need to be made to calendar dates. It is **strongly recommended** that the student study privately with a professional lesson teacher at Fowler MS (Private Lessons). For normal progress, all Concert Band students are required to practice at least 2.5 hours per week, which is to be documented on a practice sheet given to each student at the beginning of each semester. CONCERT BAND 2 MEMBERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WEEKLY PRIVATE LESSONS PROGRAM ALL YEAR (It will be difficult, but not impossible, to matriculate to the more advanced bands without private lessons). **ALL band students in grades 6-8 MUST take their instruments home EVERY DAY** or a band detention (before/after school) will be assigned. In order for this band to be eligible to participate in contests, Concert Band students are expected to maintain passing grades in all their class. If students do not pass all classes they will not be eligible participate in the extra events and activities of the Fowler Band.

CONCERT BAND

Concert Band is considered an intermediate band made up of 7th & 8th grade students.

Students in this band are required to participate in the scheduled rehearsals, concerts, and pep rallies.

Attendance at evening Fowler football games, and Saturday concerts and contests as listed in the band calendar are graded events. It is encouraged but not required that the Concert Band students participate in Solo & Ensemble Contest. It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to check the band calendar and incorporate the scheduled events into your family calendar. Please note that due to unexpected district conflicts, changes may need to be made to calendar dates. It is strongly recommended that the student study privately with a professional lesson teacher at Fowler MS (Private Lessons). For normal progress, all Concert Band students are required to practice at least 2.5 hours per week, which is to be documented on a practice sheet given to each student at the beginning of each semester. **CONCERT BAND MEMBERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WEEKLY PRIVATE LESSONS PROGRAM ALL YEAR** (It will be difficult, but not impossible, to matriculate to the more advanced bands without private lessons). ALL band students in grades 6-8 **MUST** take their instruments home EVERY DAY or a band detention (before/after school) will be assigned. In order for this band to be eligible to participate in contests, Concert Band students are expected to maintain passing grades in all their class. If students do not pass all classes they will not be eligible participate in the extra events and activities of the Fowler Band.

BEGINNING BAND

The Beginner Band is a fundamental class designed for beginning 6th or 7th grade students. Students will meet daily for 46 minutes in like-instrument classes, and will learn the necessary skills for instrumental performance.

- Beginning Flute Class
- Beginning Clarinet Class (2 sections)
- Beginning Saxophone Class
- Beginning Oboe/ Bassoon Class
- Beginning Trumpet Class (2 sections)
- Beginning French Horn Class
- Beginning Trombone Class (2 sections)
- Beginning Euphonium Class
- Beginning Tuba Class
- Beginning Percussion Class

The Beginner Band is intended as a training ground to prepare each student to participate in one of the 7th & 8th grade performing bands the following year. Students will learn a vast amount of musical and instrumental concepts the first year and will perform scales, music and band literature throughout the year. Basic music concepts such as rhythm notation, music note identification, instrumental fingerings and tone production will be covered in this class.

There will be FOUR public performances and one solo contest opportunity this first year for the Beginner Band. The first concert is an informal playing demonstration one evening in November. The second is December caroling the neighborhoods with band members 6th-8th grade. The third performance is a trip to a Band Contest Festival in April. Our final performance of the year is at our Spring Concert in May. In preparation for our May performances, we will have two after school rehearsals before each event (see calendar). These rehearsals are the only times during the year that all of the beginning classes are combined into a full band to prepare for the concert. In addition to the full band performances students are **expected** to participate in a Beginner Solo & Ensemble Contest at Fowler in April. The dates and times of these rehearsals, the Spring Concert, and contest will be given out in August, so you have several months to make plans and invite family & friends. Other than these events and the rehearsals a few days preceding each event, there are **NO OTHER TIME COMMITMENTS** for beginning band members before or after school this first year. Attendance at all rehearsals, contests & concerts are considered major grades (caroling exempt from grades).

There will be an inexpensive t-shirt used for the concerts and other band activities and a social fee charged for parties, class contests, and activities. The T-shirt will be fit **LARGE**, as it will be used for three years for pep rallies and outdoor events.

For normal progress all beginning band students are required to practice at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days per week (2.5 hours per week), which is to be documented on a practice sheet given to each student at the beginning of each semester. **ALL band students in grades 6-8 MUST take their instruments home EVERY DAY.**

Once a student is in the seventh and eighth grade, they may participate in band, athletics and various other electives. **THERE IS NOT A CONFLICT OF CLASSES, CONCERTS, OR GAMES.**

Some of the very large and very expensive instruments are owned by the school and may be issued to students selected by the director for that instrument (i.e. Oboe, Bassoon, French horn, euphonium/baritone, and tuba). There is a usage fee for school owned instruments of \$50 per semester (\$100 per year). This cost covers the summer cleaning and normal adjustments only but does not cover damages done to the instrument beyond normal use.

Private lessons are a VITAL ELEMENT in a student's musical life. The opportunity to study privately with a professional musician is one of the most important factors to individual success. These professionals provide detailed, specific, one-on-one instruction tailored for your child. Of the students who make the Texas All-State

Band, roughly 97% take private lessons! Lessons are taught at Fowler Middle School, either before, during, or after school depending on the teachers' schedules. Lessons will be 30 minutes per week at a cost of \$18 per lesson. Though optional, please consider private lessons as a necessary part of the band program.

JAZZ BAND

The 7th & 8th grade Jazz Band is a limited enrollment extracurricular organization that practices outside of the school day 1-2 times per week depending on the athletics schedule and the least number of conflicts. Jazz Band is open to band members who are enrolled concurrently in a 7th & 8th grade band. A student may not participate in only Jazz band and not a regular band class. Jazz Band 1 is limited to certain instruments including saxophones, trumpet, trombone, guitar, bass, piano, and drum set. Jazz Band 2 will consist of traditional jazz instruments (saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar, bass, piano, and drum set) as well as select non-traditional jazz instruments such as flute, euphonium & tuba based on the directors discretion. The Jazz Band performs at several concerts during the year as well as 1-2 Jazz Festivals in the spring. Every one hour Jazz Band rehearsal counts as 30 minutes towards a student's personal practice.

Select sixth grade band members may be invited to join the Jazz Band in the spring but this is at the sole discretion of the band director. There will be a Beginning Jazz Band for 6th graders starting in March (one morning per week) and they will perform at the May Beginning Band Concert.

Practice Records

Your practice card is designed to help you establish an organized routine for daily practice.

A practice card is not needed to be able to tell whether you have practiced or not. How you improve from day to day and week-to-week reveals that fact. Honesty is the best policy concerning practice time. It is helpful for parents to be involved in the student's practice and progress. Your encouragement and support is important for their success!

1. Write down the total number of hours, per week (Round off daily times to the nearest 5 min.).
2. **A parent must sign the card AFTER the week of practice.**
3. Turn in your card every Monday (or first teaching day), with no penalty for Tuesday.
4. Twenty (20) points will be deducted on Wednesday (or the third turn in date) and ten (10) additional points per day will be deducted for late cards after Wednesday. If practice card is turned in a week or more late, the maximum score you can receive is a "50."
5. Private lessons and jazz band rehearsals may be counted as 30 minutes on your practice card.
6. **NO MORE THAN ONE HOUR** per day should be practiced in fulfilling this requirement. The intent of this record is to establish a DAILY routine.

GRADE	WEEKLY PRACTICE TIME		AVERAGE DAILY TIME
110	210<	minutes	30 minutes, 7 days per week
105	180-209	minutes	30 minutes, 6 days per week
100	150-179	minutes	30 minutes, 5 days per week
90	120-149	minutes	30 minutes, 4 days per week
80	90-119	minutes	30 minutes, 3 days per week
70	60-89	minutes	30 minutes, 2 days per week
60	<59	minutes	Cards <u>still</u> must be signed for 50% credit
0			Unsigned Practice cards

Falsified entries/signatures will result in a six-weeks failure and parent conference.

SAMPLE PRACTICE CARD ENTRY:

Week	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN	TOTAL	GRADE	Parent Signature
Aug. 22-26	0	30	30	30	45	0	45	180	100	

Please **TOTAL** your practice time **and enter the grade** using the rubric at the bottom of the practice record before turning it in. A Band Director will sign that they have recorded the grade and make any comments for the week off to the side. If you see a practice card that has not been initialed by a director, then it was NOT received. Please do not sign for practicing not done.

Percussionists will be turning in weekly practice cards, 6th-8th grade, but will be required to practice AT SCHOOL on the large percussion equipment for at least 1 hour per week either before or after school and the remainder can be done at home on practice pad/ bell kit. Your weekly private lesson counts as 30 min. towards this time.

Practice Guidelines for Parents

Your child's success in band will depend a great deal on what is achieved during daily home practice sessions. Learning takes place in school, but proficiency is gained at home. You can use the following guidelines to help your youngster at home.

TIME SCHEDULE

A **half hour** a day is the minimum amount of practice time recommended for the average student. Practicing at the **same time** every day is good, but some **flexibility** should be built into this schedule. Don't bring the world to a halt at 6:30 pm every evening because it's practice time - kids need time for fun and relaxation just as adults do. If the situation merits, **reschedule** the practice session to an earlier or later time. Note: Beginners ONLY need to practice 15 minutes per day the first month of school and then start 30 min. per day after that. This is because their facial muscles have not matured enough the first month to handle 30 minutes of a practice routine without forming bad habits.

ENVIRONMENT

Practicing should be done in an area that is **free of distractions** away from the TV, radio, stereo, and family traffic. Good **lighting**, a straight-backed **chair**, **mirror**, **metronome**, and a **music stand** are definite assets. Reed players should have several reeds available during the practice session.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Spend some time **listening** to your youngster practice. Offer **constructive** criticisms. You do not need to be a former band member or musician to be able to hear improvement. Encourage them to play assignments and tests for you. Each time the student plays for a friend or relative, it helps them to feel more **comfortable** with a performance or competitive event.

IS YOUR CHILD PROGRESSING?

For the **beginning band** student, the field of instrumental music is **new** for your child. He is learning to use his **facial and finger muscles** in a different way and his breathing apparatus for a different purpose. There is a new language of symbols (notes) that require the use of his mind and body to translate this into musical sounds. All this takes **time!** Even parents who have had former instrumental experience have probably forgotten the struggle of producing those first few notes and songs.

Parents can evaluate practice sessions by asking:

1. What is your **assignment** for today?
2. Am I hearing the same **daily warm up** each day? It is important to play the **same** daily warm up and drill before beginning the assigned material.
3. Am I hearing music that they can **already play**, or am I hearing attempts at **new material**?
4. Is the **tone quality** becoming more characteristic of the instrument, or is the tone harsh, unmusical, and unpleasant?
5. Does the familiar tune or exercise move along **steadily** with some sort of fluent **rhythm**, or is it halting and jerky with no steady rhythm?

Learning how to practice is an important part of playing an instrument!

Practice Guidelines for Students

IT'S HOW YOU PRACTICE THAT COUNTS

Incorrect **habits** are sometimes more easily developed than correct habits, and a habit is hard to change so **THINK** when you practice. Avoid simply going through the motions! Remember, the playing of your instrument comes through development of **coordination**, just like any athlete.

Patience is a virtue for the ambitious player.

1. **Warm up correctly.** Each instrument should have a separate warm up for home practice that differs from the band warm up. Use a mirror and concentrate on tone quality and embouchure during long tone warm ups.
2. Set a **goal** for the practice session. Don't try to do too much at one sitting.
3. **Isolate** a problem or a section in a piece of music. It may be a rhythm, a measure, or a line of music. **Repeat** it over and over many times - just like shooting baskets in the basketball goal. Practice it **slowly** at first, and then **gradually** build up the speed using a metronome. Before you finish the practice session, play the difficult measures with the rest of the line or exercise.
4. Correctly played **Repetition** of a problem area reinforces muscle and mental **memory**.
5. In difficult **technical passages**, change the **rhythms** in the practice session to develop even, accurate, and fluid technique.
6. Practice involves **learning and reinforcing** areas that are difficult for the student. **Practice**, therefore, is not always fun because you must play music that you have not yet mastered. Try to **end** each practice session with something that is fun to play and that has already been mastered!
7. **Structure** your practice session to get the most benefit out of your time!

EXAMPLE OF A STRUCTURED PRACTICE SESSION

MATERIAL PRACTICED	TIME (minutes)	GOAL
Warm up and daily drill: (long tones, scales, lip slurs)	5 - 10	Fundamentals: tone, breath control, embouchure, technique, tonguing, etc.
New material and assignments	10 - 15	Develop new technique, increase range, expand capability of student
Previous and continuing material	10 - 15	Improvement of finger dexterity, tonguing, tone, musicality, etc.
Personal music choices	5 - 10	Enjoyment!

The practice session will vary depending on assignments and time constraints. The more consistent you are with practice time, structure, and climate, the better your results will be. Efficient use of time is important in your busy schedule.

Supplemental Private Lesson Program

VERY IMPORTANT!

Supplemental lessons are available through the band program to all band students. Individual instruction is **extremely beneficial** due to the one on one teaching environment. The supplemental teacher is able to design a program that meets each individual's needs and each student is able to progress at his/her own rate of ability. **Private lessons are very important! Please consider taking private lessons BEFORE considering the purchase of a new instrument!**

Professional teachers on each instrument will be available to teach these lessons during band class, before school, or after school. Lessons will be scheduled at your convenience on a first come basis. Students will be taught once a week during the school day. The cost of these lessons is **\$18.00** per 30-minute lesson, per week. Some lessons are available DURING school hours; however, this is entirely dependent on the availability and schedule of the instructor. If more students request during school lessons than are slots available it is "first-come-first-served." Contact your private teacher now!

www.fowlerband.com

Private Lesson Financial Aid: The Fowler Middle School Band Boosters graciously provide private lesson financial aid for those students who can demonstrate financial need. The boosters will match 50% of the cost of the lessons each week (\$9). Financial Aid selection criteria and Applications are available online at http://www.fowlerband.com/Financial_Aid_Private_Lessons.pdf or from a band director. The funds are very limited and not all who apply will be granted aid. Much of the successes of the middle school and high school bands in North Texas can be attributed to their supplemental lesson programs. In the past, the high number of students enrolled in the program throughout the Frisco School district has allowed the Frisco ISD Bands to maintain a **high standard of performance**. Supplemental lessons are not required, but are strongly recommended.

Students/Parents responsibilities to the supplemental lesson teacher:

1. Be fully prepared for each lesson.
2. Bring a pencil, method books, and any other required materials to each lesson.
3. The private teacher may require additional textbooks or music.
4. Notify the supplemental teacher **24 hours in advance** in the event a lesson must be missed****. Failure to do this, results in an unexcused absence and the lesson must still be paid for. Excused absences by the student or the teacher shall be rescheduled or the money will be refunded.
5. The cost of each lesson is \$18.00 and should be paid one month **in advance**.
6. Due to the nature of the instructors' financial arrangement, we ask that any student wishing to discontinue the lesson program wait until the end of the semester.
7. Private lesson teachers' phone numbers and e-mail addresses can be found online at: <http://www.fowlerband.com/private-lessons.htm>

Classroom Policies

POLICIES: There are four basic policies that must be adhered to by all students.

RESPECT

MENTAL FOCUS

MAXIMUM EFFORT

PRIDE

1. **Respect your fellow band members, band directors, and YOURSELF.**
We are a BAND FAMILY and should treat each other in that manner. There will be ZERO TOLERANCE for the following behaviors: Theft, Fighting, Profanity, &/or Vandalism. FIRST TIME violations result in immediate referral to an Asst. Principal and Parent Conference. As an elective class, participation and membership in the Falcon Band is a privilege, not a right.
2. **Communicate effectively and promptly** regarding conflicts with the scheduled calendar of events.
3. **Look at the director when he/she is talking.** It is important that the director knows that he/she has your complete attention. Focus on the rehearsal and what is being learned.
4. **Do not talk during rehearsal.** If you have any questions that need to be asked, please raise your hand and be called upon.
5. **Be prepared for each rehearsal.** Bring the proper equipment and supplies to every rehearsal. Practice your part so that you are ready for the rehearsal both mentally and physically. Every student is expected to have a **pencil** on their stand at all times. Marking music helps students to learn faster and increases productivity. A student loses 10 % of their six-weeks participation grade every time they do not have all their materials for class (Instrument, binder, reeds/mouthpiece, and pencil)
6. **For ALL band members: Instruments are to go home every night.** This is to ensure that the music/assignments are prepared and to warrant your parent's investment in an expensive musical instrument. The SAME consequences will result for instruments left at school as any rules violation. Accordingly, instruments left at home constitute the same violation. **We can't be the best, unless we make this commitment!**
7. **No food, drink, gum, "hanging out", nor running in the band hall or practice rooms.** This beautiful band hall facility is provided for you by the taxpayers of Frisco ISD at a cost of over \$1 million dollars (when including instruments and equipment). Take pride in keeping it clean and free from damage. When music is not occurring, consider the band hall a quiet place. Band Students are the ONLY ones allowed in the band hall! NO STUDENT IS EVER ALLOWED IN THE FOWLER BAND HALL WHO IS NOT IN BAND. YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING GUESTS INTO THE BAND HALL AT ANY TIME.
8. **Lockers:** Band Lockers are for musical instruments and music folders only. They are for books, materials from other classes. **You must lock your locker shut every day!** Cases must remain inside your locker at all times, even during your band class.

CONSEQUENCES: The directors hold members of the Fowler Middle School Band program to **high standards of accountability**. The actions of each member of the band program affect the overall image of the band in both the school and the community. Students who choose band as their elective are among the **best students** in the school and discipline problems should be uncommon in the Fowler Band program. However, if discipline actions are needed, the following consequences will occur.

1. Verbal warning &/or Written Warning
2. Removal from rehearsal, student conference, & possible band detention/parent contact
3. Band detention, loss of chair placement, parents will be contacted
4. C-Hall and parent conference
5. Office referral, possible removal from the band.

Attendance Policy

Regular **attendance and participation** is important for your daily progress and development. Participation in rehearsals and performances outside normal school hours is a required part of the band program. Absences for personal illness, and other extenuating circumstances are sometimes unavoidable. **When possible**, the parent should give **advance notice** to the director of any absence. **Unexcused absences from class or from any rehearsal or performance may result in a lowered grade or a zero for that performance.** Remember - **you** are an important part of the band and others depend upon you! An unexcused absence at a listed performance by a Symphonic Band member may result in removal to another band class or elective even on a first offense.

STUDENTS ARE CONSIDERED TARDY ONE MINUTE AFTER THE TARDY BELL BEGINS

This is to allow students to manage the combination on their lockers, carefully assemble their instruments, and be seated with all materials. Students will NOT be allowed to "run" through the band hall in an attempt to "beat the clock." Every student is given TWO warnings before consequences occur. The band will follow the Fowler Middle School tardy policy for consequences following these warnings.

We need every minute of the class time to become a great band!!

Communication of attendance conflicts is an important skill for students to develop. Adequate and thorough communication skills will require the assistance of both the parent and the director. Please remember that it is always helpful to have both a **written** and **verbal** communication plan. The main office does not notify the teacher of the details regarding absences. Please e-mail (preferred) or call Mr. Dunham in the event of an absence or conflict AS SOON as it is known. DunhamD@friscoisd.org (469) 633-5070

Eligibility Requirements

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) states that band students are **ineligible** to participate in **extracurricular activities** for the six weeks period immediately following a six weeks grade of 69 or less in ANY subject area. However, if after 3 weeks, that student is passing **all** of his/her classes, he/she becomes eligible at the end of the **4th** week. This "no pass - no play" rule (Texas House Bill 72) effects all extracurricular events such as football performances, pep rallies, competitions, U.I.L. Contest, etc. **NOTE:** Band rehearsals, sectionals, and concerts are an extension of classroom activities, **not** extracurricular, so the "no pass, no play" rule does not apply and students are **required** to attend these events.

Students have a responsibility to pass their classes and be eligible for band events and contests. **Each student plays a vital role in the band and we are dependent upon each other for success!** It has been our experience that most students who fail a class are simply not turning in their work.

Section Rehearsals

(NOT FOR BEGINNING BAND)

Section rehearsals are important in a quality band program. Small group work with like instruments ensures adequate individual attention and section development. All **Symphonic Band, Honor Band & Concert Band** students are **required** to attend **one 60-minute** section rehearsal per week for a grade. During these sectionals students will work on the fundamental skills of their instrument, practice difficult sections of the band music, learn the All-Region music, and have chair tests on these areas. Academic grades can and will be taken during this sectional time before or after school. Section rehearsal days will be scheduled starting the second full week of school. In order to accommodate the student athletes and cheerleaders, sectional days and times may need to **change** at the beginning of each new sport. **Every attempt will be made to schedule around athletic games and other school activities.** You can expect a schedule of section rehearsal days and times in a few days. This is to allow us to collect all of the data regarding student activities and potential conflicts. **Sectionals will be either in the morning (7:20am-8:15 am) OR Afternoon (3:45pm-5:00pm) depending on the least number of sports conflicts.** Percussionists may have additional rehearsals and responsibilities.

Please try to schedule doctors' appointments, tutorials, etc. at times that do not conflict with weekly section rehearsals. If unavoidable conflicts occur, please communicate these conflicts promptly **in writing** along with a **verbal explanation** from the student and/or parent. **Communication** is vital to a successful program.

BAND GRADING POLICY

1. The band's grading policy is the same as for all classes at Fowler Middle School.
2. All grades will be averaged together at the end of each 6 weeks according to the indicated weights.
3. Extra credit will be given for attending any approved musical performance.

For All Bands

1. **Tests= ALL Performances** as listed in the Band Calendar (including Concerts & Contests), Major Playing Tests, Clinics*, Section rehearsals*, Projects/papers, 4 Beginner Rehearsals.
2. **Daily Work=** Quizzes, Practice Cards, Daily Playing Grades
3. **Participation =** Supplies (**Including a Pencil**), Punctuality, Binder Organization
 A student loses 10 % of their six-weeks participation grade every time they do not have all their materials for class (Instrument, binder, reeds/mouthpiece, and pencil).

*= Section Rehearsals, Football Games, and clinic grades are only for 7th & 8th graders in Symphonic Band, Honor Band, and Concert Band. Not for Beginners.

Band Equipment

1. STUDENT INSTRUMENTS

Your instrument is extremely **valuable** and proper care should be taken to maintain its value. Should your instrument be in need of **repair**, you must always check with your director before taking it to the repair shop. **Never** try to repair the instrument yourself, as you do not have the proper tools or skills required. All instruments must have a **permanent nametag** on the case handle. **NO ONE SHOULD PLAY OR HANDLE AN INSTRUMENT THAT DOES NOT BELONG TO HIM/HER.** It is recommended that all students have their instrument insured under their parent's home owners/renters policy!

2. SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS

Students who play school-owned instruments should take the same care as they would their own instrument. To cover the expense of summer cleaning and adjustment, all students using school owned instruments are required to pay a maintenance fee of **\$100.00 per year** (Oboe, bassoon, tenor saxophone, bari saxophone, bass clarinets, French horns, euphoniums, and tubas). The student is liable for damage due to negligence, carelessness or loss. The student must always inform the director of any repairs needed. **It is recommended that all students have their instrument insured under their parent's home owners/renters policy!**

3. INSTRUMENT STORAGE LOCKERS

Each student will be given an instrument storage area (and lock) to keep their instrument in during the school day. These lockers should be used for instrument and folder storage only (not as a school or gym locker). **KEEP THEM NEAT AND CLEAN!** Care should be taken to keep lockers in good working order. No instrument should be left in the instrument locker over the weekend or on

weeknights. This is a security measure for the safety of your instrument as well as the home practice requirements. **DO NOT TELL ANY PERSON YOUR COMBINATION.** Be sure to lock your locker at all times when not in class. Lost, misplaced, or stolen locks may be purchased for \$10.00. Personal locks may not be used on a band Locker.

NEVER PUT YOUR LOCK DOWN ON THE GROUND, INSIDE YOUR LOCKER OR ON ANYONE ELSE'S LOCKER. Unlocked band lockers WILL result in detention assigned.

4. CHAIRS / STANDS

The chairs in the band hall are for sitting only. Please keep all four legs on the floor and do not lean back in the chair. The band hall chairs are set for the largest band class and are placed in the appropriate place before school begins. **Do not move chairs** from the rows at any time. Music stands are for holding music only. **Please do not lean on the stand or write on the stand.**

General Supplies

All students are required to have the appropriate supplies for their instrument. Select supplies may be purchased from the band hall at a **discounted price** or from a music store of your choice.

Flute- cleaning/tuning rod, soft cloth, optional flute stand

Reed instruments-a minimum of (4) four good playable reeds - (3) for oboe and bassoon, a reed guard (case), cork grease, & a swab for cleaning. We will sell clarinet and saxophone reeds **BY THE BOX**, not by individual reeds, and only as supply allows. We order these reeds in bulk and pass the savings along to you. Clarinet and saxophone players are expected to use Vandoren brand reeds. Oboe & bassoon will need to purchase their reeds **EXCLUSIVELY** from their private lessons teachers and the band hall. They will also need a small container of water for reeds (Empty medication bottle)

Brass instruments- a soft polish cloth for cleaning, a cloth for grease & oil, valve oil, slide grease, a cleaning snake, mouthpiece brush. (Trombones: Slide O Mix and a water spray bottle.)

Percussion- each percussion student will be provided with a list of required mallets and sticks to be purchased each year and continuing through high school.

Pep Rallies & Football Games

The Symphonic Band, Honor Band, & Concert Band students will perform at selected pep rallies, & 1 football game. Many band students are involved in sports, cheerleading, and other activities. If a band student is on the football team or the cheerleading squad for a performance game, he/she will **not** be required to perform with the band except when not playing and cheering (ex: half-time).

Pep Rally Procedure (Not for Beginners)

1. Dress in your Black Band T-Shirt. It is important that you wear your band shirt for the entire school day to promote band pride. Also, there will NOT be time to change into your band shirt before hand. The only exception to this is if you are a member of an athletic team or cheerleader when you will wear what your coach/sponsor requires.
2. Bring your binder with all music, and instrument.
3. You will be dismissed a few minutes early from your last period class to warm up together. You will be released via overhead announcement, do not ask your classroom teacher to dismiss you. Come directly to the band hall and get all of your equipment and then quickly proceed to the gym.
4. During the band's performance it is important that you watch the conductor so that we can play **TOGETHER** with precision!
5. You may **not** make noise on your instrument or mouthpiece at any time unless you are told to do so by a director.
6. Stand and participate **enthusiastically** to show that the band supports our school.
7. All specified Band students are expected to participate in the pep rallies. A pep rally is a required performance and grades will be given for all performances. Cheerleaders will perform on the feature song only, but Athletes will perform with the band for the entire pep rally because Pep Rallies are considered a band performance. Athletes will be allowed to "run in" with their team, but then should report to the band when playing our feature songs.
8. Students will be responsible for transporting all materials back to the band hall. Leave nothing in the gym!

Football Game Procedure (Not for Beginners)

1. Dress in your Black Band T-Shirt and shorts (as weather permits). Shorts must meet FMS dress code.
2. Each person is responsible for their equipment at all times, this includes your instrument, binder, music and stand.
3. We will travel by bus to the game. If they wish, parents may pick you up after the game at the stadium as long as they are PHYSICALLY THERE at the end of the game and check you out with a band director. You will only be released to a parent while in our presence.
4. No one except **band members** are allowed to sit in the stands with the band.
5. **Watch** the director when performing music. Get your music ready rapidly when it is announced for performance.
6. You are allowed to cheer with the cheerleaders. Treat visitors, cheerleaders and other directors with respect and politeness. Maintain your **self-discipline** at all times.
7. **Remain in your designated spot at all times. No roaming, switching rows, or leaving your place without permission of a chaperone or director.**
8. Students will be responsible for transporting all materials back to the band hall, regardless of how they will be getting home. This means that students ride home after the game and who play large instruments must either take instrument home after the game or ride the bus back to school and take it to the band hall.
9. Handouts and web site updates with detailed information will be given to students before the game days. Please make it a priority to share information with your parents!

Commitment

The impression that the band makes has a great deal to do with the spirit, pride, and future reputation we will create for our school and for our band. You must make a real effort to learn and improve daily in school and in band. Be a hard worker in everything you do, as that will benefit you in all that you do for the rest of your life. Regular practice on your instrument is your responsibility in order for the band to improve and be successful. The Falcon Band will only be the best if its members are dedicated to being the very best musicians they can be.

Remember, you are an important part of the Falcon Band.

