



# Novi Middle School

## Orchestra HandBook

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Welcome,  
I am greatly looking forward to this school year and all the opportunities to learn and create music with the bands and orchestras at Novi Middle School. Please find below information about our program, some basic guidelines and concert dates. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me, phone (248-449-1600) or email ([mrais@novi.k12.mi.us](mailto:mrais@novi.k12.mi.us)).

## Course Information

### Materials List

1. Orchestra Expressions Book 2 for your instrument
2. Padlock for instrument storage locker
3. Black 1.5” three-ring binder
4. Tab dividers for binder
5. Pencils
6. Chin instruments: instrument, bow, chin rest, rosin, tuner, metronome
7. Floor instruments: instrument, bow, rock stop, rosin, tuner, metronome

### Grade Requirements

Students will be evaluated through tests, performances, participation and homework assignments. Tests will be written, playing or rhythmic interpretation. Daily participation is the largest portion of the student’s grade. Factors for participation are being prepared for class with all materials including instrument, accessories, music and a pencil, a positive attitude, daily preparation and showing effort. Homework assignments may be in the form of practice or written assignments. Concert attendance and participation are also factored into the grade.

- 30% Concert Attendance and Review
- 20% Daily Participation
- 20% Effort and Practice Logs
- 30% Assessment: Assignments and Playing Tests

## **Class Participation**

- Arriving to class with instrument, music and proper accessories.
- Actively contributing to the learning process of the classroom.
- Returning instrument, music, materials, to their proper place at the end of the class period.
- Not chewing gum or eating during class.
- Attending every concert and before/after school rehearsal.

## **Classroom Expectations**

- Respect others, yourself and school property
- Come to class prepared with all materials and a positive attitude
- Pick up after yourself, keep our band room clean ☺
- Keep materials in your band locker and **always** keep it locked to maintain security.
- When director is working with another section, be respectful and musically productive.
- Practice Active Listening
- No food, gum or drink in class (water bottles are ok)
- Be kind to others inside and outside the band room.
- Come to class ready to learn and have fun.
- Do not touch percussion instruments unless you are a percussionist.

## **Consequences**

- Strike on Warning
- Strike two: Put instrument away, loss of participation for the day
- Strike three: Student will be asked to leave classroom, write a letter to parent and return it signed. Parent contact will be made if behavior continues.

## **Practice**

Daily practice is to playing an instrument as homework is to other classes. In order for any student to be successful in instrument music, focused practice is essential. Please encourage your child to play their instrument daily. Students should aim to practice 20-30 minutes daily. Practice assignments may be used during the school year.

Students who need additional assistance on their band music may make an appointment with the director to seek help before or after school.

## **Sample Practice Session:**

1. Bowing Exercises (2-3 minutes)
2. Scales and scale patterns (5 minutes)
3. Method book assignment (5-10 minutes)
4. Orchestra music (10-20 minutes)
5. Fun review, pop music etc. (5 minutes or more)

### Practice Tips:

1. Practice 5 days or more a week
2. Practice new music and review old music
3. Ask for help when you hit a hard spot
4. Pick apart music one note/ measure at a time
5. Practice with a friend sometimes
6. Use “Cut and Paste” method

While schedules can get hectic and students suffer the unexpected sickness, there are practice techniques that can be employed in these circumstances. Please contact the director if you need assistance with extra practice techniques.

### Private Lessons

Private lessons are strongly encouraged for all band students. A student working independently with a teacher can develop individual skills; learn solo music, and other repertoire specific to their instrument. Moreover, private lessons help students develop the skills necessary to be successful musicians. A private teacher list is available in the band room and recommendations can be made upon request.

## **Performance Information**

### Concert Attendance

Because each person is an important part of the group, **all performances are required in order to meet the academic expectations of the class.** Concerts are a way for students to exhibit what they have learned over the course of the year, and are a vital part of each student’s music education. Performances are a unique experience that cannot be re-created. Since unexcused absences from a performance cannot be tolerated, *a student’s overall grade will be lowered by a maximum of one letter grade.* The director may consider special circumstances for absence. Written excuses from the parent must be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to a performance. Emergencies and illness will be treated on an individual basis, but generally an illness excuse must be presented to the teacher WITHIN 24 hours of the students return to school. Improper notification could result in an unexcused absence.

Excused absences from a concert need to be made up. An individual who finds himself/herself in this situation needs to make an appointment with the director to determine a make-up assignment.

### Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Band Festival

Every spring the ensembles will participate in the District 4 MSBOA Band and Orchestra Festival. The students perform a planned program and sight read new music for a panel of judges who comment on the areas for improvement and strengths of the ensemble. The attendance policy is the same as for other performances.

\*Please note that festival may fall on a Friday evening or Saturday. There is no time or location listed because we do not receive that information until 2-3 weeks prior to the event. Please leave the entire day available.

## **Solo and Ensemble Festival**

Twice a year, in December and April, students will have the opportunity to perform at Solo and Ensemble Festival. At this event students will perform a solo, an ensemble or both in front of a judge. Students will receive feedback on their performance and a rating of I-V (a I is superior). Those students that receive a rating of I or II earn a medal. Students usually find the experience to be quite rewarding, even though it may be a little intimidating the first time.

## **Concert Dress**

### Ladies

Black skirt (appropriate length) or pants

White dress shirt

Black socks or nylons

Black shoes

### Gentlemen

Black pants

White dress shirt

Black Socks

Black dress shoes

Black jeans or athletic pants are not acceptable. Tennis shoes are not acceptable.

# **Class Materials**

## **Music**

Each student will need a black binder with tabs to keep their music and class materials in. This folder is to go to and from school on a daily basis. Students are responsible to keep track of their music and have it in class. Do not rely on your stand partner to have theirs, as they may forget or be absent. Students are responsible for returning music in acceptable condition at the end of the school year and will be required to pay for lost or damaged music. Sheet music and rehearsal books take the place of textbooks for other classes.

## **Lockers**

Each student is assigned an instrument locker at the beginning of the school year. Some students will have to share lockers as space is limited. Students are responsible for providing locks to secure their lockers. This is to prevent lost or stolen items. Novi Middle School cannot be held responsible for items missing from an unlocked locker. Please provide the combination for you lock to the director. This information is kept confidential and is only used if a student forgets their combination.

## **Percussion Instruments**

There is a large number of expensive percussion equipment in the band room. Only percussionists enrolled in a band class are allowed to play them.

Please Sign and Return By \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing below, you are signifying that you...**

**...have read and understand the contents of this handbook.**

**...agree to follow the guidelines found within.**

**...have posted important dates on your calendar and understand the attendance policies.**

### STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT INFORMATION

Parent (s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's E-mail Address\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check this box if you do NOT want your son or daughter to appear in photos or video taken of the band.

Please check this box if you are interested in volunteering or chaperoning this year.

\*Email addresses will be added to a mailing list used to update parents and students about information regarding the band program. Messages will be addressed using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC).