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*Festus Middle School*

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**2024-25**

# **Band Handbook**



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**Mr. Evans, Director**  
**Mr. Lorenz, Assistant Director**  
**Mrs. Sekelsky, HS Director of Bands**

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Dear Band Students and Parents:

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of the Festus Band Program. We are particularly glad you have chosen to be a part of the fine tradition of excellence in Festus bands. As students, you have made a commitment of time and dedication. As teachers, we are committed to providing your student with the knowledge and skill to succeed continuing through high school and beyond. With a positive attitude and regular practice, I know you will find that your efforts in band will be rewarding.

As parents, you have also made a commitment to your child's participation in the band program. With support and encouragement, you can be a vital part of your child's success in band. Here are some suggestions of how you can better help your child in the band program.

1. Show an interest in the music study of your child.
2. Arrange a regular time for your child to practice, and find a quiet place for practicing to occur without interruptions.
3. Help your child practice as much as possible by counting, studying music texts, etc.
4. Help your child keep a weekly record of practicing.
5. Help your child maintain his/her instrument properly by providing a safe place for keeping at home, keeping the instrument in good repair, and keeping current on needed instrument supplies.
6. Teach your child to be prepared and on time for rehearsals and performances.
7. Make faithful attendance at all activities important.
8. Encourage your child to play for others when the opportunity arises, in the home, at school, church, and in the community.
9. Discuss with the music teachers anything that will help them understand your child.
10. See that your child keeps current on all requirements for band class and help them remember to take their instrument to and from school regularly.

Thanks again for your support of the Festus Band Program!

Sincerely,

Scott Evans  
Director

Devin Lorenz  
Assistant Director

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## REQUIRED 2024-25 PERFORMANCE EVENTS

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<b>Thu</b>	<b>Dec 5</b>	<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Band Concert</b>	<b>Festus R6 PAC</b>
Sat.	March or April	TBA	Junior High Music Festival	TBA
<b>Thu</b>	<b>May 8</b>	<b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Spring Band Concert</b>	<b>Festus R6 PAC</b>

If additional performances are scheduled during the school year, information will be sent out in advance to notify parents of these performances.

It is important that students and parents make arrangements to participate in these performances. Performing for parents is the best way to show off what the students learn in band! Appearance is an important part of performing. Please plan ahead so that students are able to wear nice, all black, clothes for the performance (in other words, *no jeans or tennis shoes*).

Please notify the band directors well in advance of a schedule conflict.

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## PRACTICE TIME

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Regular practice is essential for success in music. It is important to establish a practice routine, and that it take place in a quiet area free from distractions. Practice logs are helpful tools for evaluation of band progress. The following are policies that will promote acceptable levels of achievement:

1. Enter practice time in minutes each day online or on timecard.
2. Practice time will be graded weekly and figured as part of the band grade.
3. If a child takes a 30 minute private lesson on the band instrument, 60 minutes practice time may be recorded for that day.
4. The student may count up to 30 minutes per week of piano practice if the child is taking piano lessons in addition to band.
5. Late entries –the maximum accepted will be 2 weeks back for full credit.

The following grading scale will be used in determining weekly practice grades:

60 minutes +	10+ points
50-59 minutes	9 points
40-49 minutes	8 points
30-39 minutes	7 points
0-29 minutes	0-6 points

Students will also have the opportunity to earn exemption from weekly practice logs for the remainder of the school year through successful completion of a number of proficiency check-offs:

30 check-offs for 7th Gr and 20 for 8th Gr.

Do not hesitate to contact a director if you have any questions concerning your child's progress in band.

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## GRADING POLICY

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The grade earned in band will consist of four important areas:

### **A. Evaluation of Performance**

Students are expected to show measurable progress with regard to the degree of proficiency they demonstrate on their particular instrument. The grade for this category reflects improvement (or lack thereof) of musical skills, related to individual performance. This portion of the grade will be determined in part through individual playing proficiency checks. Students are expected to successfully complete 5 proficiency checks per Quarter (10 each Semester) to earn full credit in this category. Proficiency Check-Offs are 50pts each. Students are able to make multiple attempts to complete each check-off if needed. These are typically completed in class on Fridays, and students are also able to come in after school by appointment.

A musical performance is the culmination of the materials presented in class and other performance techniques taught in class throughout the year. Students participating in band are learning individually, but a substantial part of band is learning how to work together as one large ensemble. Therefore, students will be required to attend all performances and will be given credit for each performance. There are three acceptable reasons for being excused from a performance: (a) unavoidable conflict, (b) student illness, and (c) emergency. **All absences require prior personal director notification.** Absences due to a student's work schedule, vacation, or non-school sport event are not considered excused.

### **B. Ensemble Contribution/Participation/Effort**

Students must be on time to rehearsals, performances, etc., with the right equipment and music. Students are expected to show a willingness to learn and work together toward the goal of improving both individual and group skills. The grade for this category covers both musical skills, desire to improve those skills, and general demeanor. In any event of inability to play, the student must notify the director prior to the beginning of rehearsal. Make up work may be assigned by the teacher, however there can be no real substitute for class rehearsal time.

### **C. Practice Log**

Practice time will be collected each week and graded as outlined in this handbook (see page 2). In the case of an inability to play their instrument, exemptions will be made within reason. Make up work may be assigned.

### **D. Written Assignments**

For cross-curricular writing support, notebooks will be used to answer board questions, write down instructions, music theory/history instruction, and a listening log of recordings for the class. Expect periodic completion grades for the notebook. Written quizzes are also included in this category.

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## UNIFORMS

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**Concert Black Attire** – Everyone should be in a nice all-black top, black dress pants/skirts, black dress shoes. No flip flops or sneakers. All black - no other colors. School dress code applies to all attire. Example of appropriate clothing: Collared black dress shirt, black slacks, black socks, and black dress shoes.

To sum it up – the better we look, the better we feel when we perform. The better condition we keep our instrument in, the better we will feel about how we sound when we perform. The better we feel about how we look and sound when we perform, the better our performance will be.

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## EQUIPMENT CARE

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The Festus R-6 School District is not responsible for stolen or damaged instruments that are owned, rented, or borrowed by students. Although the school has instrument storage available, no storage space is 100% secure. Instrument storage rooms and practice rooms are not secure, and the school cannot be responsible for anything left in them, either during the school day or overnight. Parents are advised to make sure their homeowners or renters policies cover musical instruments, most do. Students must take proper care of instruments including not leaving them in classrooms, buses, hallways, etc., during the school day, weekends, or vacations. Under no circumstances should private instruments be housed at school during the summer. Students need to take care not to leave instruments unattended in precarious positions (on music stands which can be easily bumped, on chairs sticking out into aisles, and standing or lying on the floor where someone could knock them over, step on them or kick them).

### Brass Instruments:

1. Always empty the instrument of moisture before storing.
2. The outside of the instrument should be kept clean. You may use a clean dry cloth to wipe it down.
3. All the tuning slides must be free and easily moved.
4. The trombone slide and the valves on all the valved instruments must be working freely and quickly.
5. All major dents should be removed. Dents in the lead pipe will cause intonation problems.
6. Water key corks must not leak air or water.

### Woodwind Instruments:

1. The keys must be kept in adjustment.
2. Worn pads must be replaced or they will cause tuning and tone problems
3. A special note about reeds:
  - a. Buy your reeds by the box if possible
  - b. Have at least four good reeds in a reed case and alternate them often. When one splits, break in a new reed immediately, that way you will always have four good ones ready for performance.
  - c. At the middle school level, clarinet players should play a 2.5 (med soft) strength to 3 (med) strength reed. Use a firm reed that plays in tune. Old reeds wear out, and become too soft.
  - d. Saxophone players should never use anything stronger than a 3 strength reed.
  - e. Never use a chipped, split or worn out reed in our band.

### Percussion Instruments:

1. Keep all equipment packed away properly and/or covered when not in use.
2. Worn, dented, or cut heads must be replaced for all instruments.
3. Use of the proper sticks is required for all instruments.
4. Never play with broken or split sticks.
5. Tune drum heads at least once a week outside class.
6. Always return all instruments and mallets back to their place of storage.

**A YEARLY TRIP TO THE INSTRUMENT REPAIR SHOP (DURING THE SUMMER) IS STRONGLY SUGGESTED TO KEEP INSTRUMENTS IN THEIR BEST PLAYING CONDITION. THIS KIND OF ROUTINE/PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE IS CRITICAL TO KEEPING THE INSTRUMENT IN PLAYING CONDITION.**

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# EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

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## **Band Method Book**

All students are required to have a band book. Sixth grade students can get their book when they rent their instrument (they are also available at music stores that service band instruments). The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade books will be ordered and be available through the school when they are needed.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade**      **Tradition of Excellence Bk 1 & 2**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Grade**      **Tradition of Excellence Bk 2 & 3**

## **Class Notebook**

All students are to have a *single subject wire-bound notebook* for band class (75-100 pgs). This notebook will be used to answer board questions, keep a listening log, music theory and music history instruction. The notebooks will be graded periodically for content and completeness.

## **Instrumental Needs:**

### **Flutes**

- \_\_\_ tuning rod
- \_\_\_ cleaning swab
- \_\_\_ polishing cloth

### **Oboes**

- \_\_\_ cork grease
- \_\_\_ water container
- \_\_\_ two good reeds
- \_\_\_ cleaning swab

### **Clarinets & Saxophones**

- \_\_\_ cork grease
- \_\_\_ 4 good reeds at all times
- \_\_\_ mouthpiece cap
- \_\_\_ cleaning swabs
- \_\_\_ neck strap (saxophones)
- \_\_\_ cloth for cleaning mouthpiece
- \_\_\_ reed guard

### **Bassoons**

- \_\_\_ cork grease
- \_\_\_ water container
- \_\_\_ cleaning swab
- \_\_\_ seat strap
- \_\_\_ 2 good reeds

### **Brass**

- \_\_\_ slide cream (trombones)
- \_\_\_ valve oil (except trombones)
- \_\_\_ polishing cloth
- \_\_\_ cleaning snake
- \_\_\_ mouthpiece brush

### **Percussion**

- \_\_\_ 2 pairs of snare drum sticks
- \_\_\_ practice pad or snare for home
- \_\_\_ 1 pair bell mallets
- \_\_\_ 1 pair timpani mallets
- \_\_\_ 1 small stick bag
- \_\_\_ 2-4 pairs of yarn mallets

It is recommended that all students have a music stand (folding or wire) for home practice.

**It is essential that all students have the proper equipment for their instrument. If there are any questions concerning these lists do not hesitate to contact your child's director.**

# MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND HANDBOOK APPROVAL FORM

**PLEASE SIGN & RETURN THIS PAGE TO YOUR BAND DIRECTOR BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL**

Please take the time to read the contents of the Middle School Band Handbook located at: [www.festusbands.org](http://www.festusbands.org) and sign this form indicating an understanding of all expectations. You also indicate knowledge of all the required performances and understand the commitment. If you have any questions concerning this handbook do not hesitate to contact Mr. Evans. This form should be signed and returned to the band directors during the first full week of school.

I have read and understand the contents of this handbook.

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Print Student Name

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date



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