

*Edison Middle School
Band Handbook*

2008-2009



Mike Lehman
Director of Bands

www.edisonbands.org

Edison Middle School
Band Hand Book
2008-2009

Dear Band Parents and Students,

My name is Mike Lehman and I am the Director of Bands here at Edison Middle School. Last year, the Bands experienced great successes and earned countless awards and accolades at every concert, contest, festival, and performance they attended. The Edison Middle School Band Program has established itself among the preeminent band programs in the Midwest, not just Illinois. Whether you are new or returning to Edison Middle School, I am thrilled that you are part of the Band Program!

As the leader of the Concert Bands and Jazz Band I and II, I plan to continue right where we left off at the end of last year. You should expect high standards, hard challenges, and memorable performances.

Let this handbook serve as guide and reference for the school year. This book will include everything from course descriptions to rules and expectations. Please take the time to review this book thoroughly and continue to refer to it throughout the school year. Also, please make note of the Bands' Website: www.edisonbands.org. There, you will find the most current announcement, schedule, and information regarding the Band Program. In addition, make sure you are signed up on the Bands' Email List on the home page if you have not already.

I am very excited for the 2008-2009 school year to get started and I look forward to working with everyone!

Sincerely,

Mike Lehman
Director of Bands
Edison Middle School

Edison Middle School Concert Bands

The Edison Middle School Band Program is dedicated to giving students the opportunity to grow musically, socially, and academically. Through musical performance, students learn how to perform and appreciate music of a variety of styles and levels of difficulty. Through group involvement, students learn how to work together to achieve common goals and develop group discipline and respect for fellow students. Students learn to focus on goals and achievements that are more than personal and develop self-discipline. Through the study of harmony, scales, rhythms, etc, students develop skills that will allow them to truly understand and appreciate the foundation of music as well as the aesthetics.

At Edison, there is a 6th and a 7th/8th grade concert band. Students will play a variety of music from classical to popular literature. Emphasis is placed on the development of fundamental skills related to posture, breathing, embouchure, fingerings, counting, music reading, and overall tone production. Regular practice is a must and private instruction is strongly encouraged.

Edison Middle School Jazz Bands

Any student in the Edison Middle School Band program (6th, 7th or 8th grade band) is eligible to participate in a jazz band by audition. If a student participated in a jazz band in previous years he/she is not automatically in a jazz band, everyone must audition to participate. Jazz Band 1 auditions will be held the last week in May; date will be determined by the Director. If student doesn't make it into Jazz Band 1, he/she will be placed in Jazz Band 2. There will be NO Jazz Band 2 audition during the next school year. If you want to participate in Jazz Band 1 or 2, you must audition during the time and date set for audition. Jazz Band 1 will begin rehearsals in early August from 10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. Monday thru Friday (full ensemble) in the band room.

Jazz Band 1 will resume after school on Monday August 25th 3:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. (full ensemble) in the band room. The Regular Rehearsal Schedule is as follows:

Monday—Full Band 3:00-4:30

Tuesday—Sax Sectional 3:00-4:30

Wednesday—Brass Sectional 3:00-4:30

Thursday—Rhythm Section Sectional 3:00-4:30

Friday—Full Band 3:00-4:30

Jazz Band 2 will start on Monday September 15th. The Regular Rehearsal Schedule for Jazz Band 2 is as follows:

Monday—Full Band 4:30-5:30

Tuesday—Sax Sectional 4:30-5:30

Wednesday—Brass Sectional 4:30-5:30

Thursday—Rhythm Section Sectional 4:30-5:30

Friday—Full Band 4:30-5:30

Jazz Band 3 will be for the 6th grade class and for beginners. Jazz Band 3 will start in mid-September (the Director will provide a date as soon as it becomes available). The Jazz Band 3 schedule will be the same as the other jazz bands, but they will meet in the morning from 7:00a.m.-7:45a.m. in the band room. The Regular Rehearsal Schedule for Jazz Band 3 is as follows:

Monday—Full Band 7:00-7:45

Tuesday—Sax Sectional 7:00-7:45

Wednesday—Brass Sectional 7:00-7:45

Thursday—Rhythm Section Sectional 7:00-7:45

Friday—Full Band 7:00-7:45

The Jazz Band 1 audition is very competitive. The students will be auditioned by a point system. The audition will be tape-recorded. The students will be judged on the following categories for participation in Jazz Band 1.

- Tone
- Style
- Technique
- Rhythm
- Scales
- Improvisation
- Sight Reading

The audition is the determining factor for placement in Jazz Band 1 and 2. Part assignments, adding students in after audition and chair placement will be made by only the Director and can change if the Director sees that it will help the entire band. It is the Director's choice who is placed in Jazz Band 1, 2 and 3. Everyone who tries out may or may not be able to participate. Please understand the Director has the final say. Students must attend ALL jazz band rehearsals. The Jazz Band meets frequently and regular attendance is IMPERATIVE. Students enrolled in extra-curricular activities at Edison can be in jazz band. Students are encouraged to be involved in a variety of activities while at Edison. I, the Director, try to resolve all conflicts of extra-curricular activities. If conflicts cannot be resolved the person may be asked to choose one or the other to resolve the conflict.

Band Grading Policy

The grade for Band is broken down into the following categories:

- **50% Participation (Class Participation, Concert Attendance)**
- **50% Major Grades (Completion of Practice Reports, Playing Tests, Written Tests, Assignments)**

Extra Credit will be given for attending approved concerts, musicals, plays, etc. In order to receive the extra credit, students must hand in a program of the concert, musical, or play to the Director. Students may also write a report on a professional musician. (See Director for paper details)

Band Equipment

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 the Director before taking it to the shop. Never try to repair the instrument yourself, as you may not have the proper tools or skills required.** All instruments must have a permanent name tag. NO ONE SHOULD PLAY OR HANDLE AN INSTRUMENT THAT DOES NOT BELONG TO HIM/HER.

School Owned Instruments

Students who play school owned instruments should take the same care as they would their own instrument. The student is liable for damage due to negligence or carelessness and for loss, but not for normal wear. **The student must always inform the Director of any repairs needed.**

Instrument Storage Area

Each student will have access to the instrument storage area. This area is for instrument storage only! KEEP YOUR AREA NEAT AND CLEAN!

Music and Folders

Show the proper respect and care for your music and folder. All markings on the music should be made in PENCIL only.

Band Room and Practice Rooms

These are your rooms and should reflect your attitude towards the band program. Show respect and pride by keeping them neat and clean. NO FOOD, DRINK, OR GUM IS ALLOWED IN THE BAND ROOM OR PRACTICE ROOMS. There will be absolutely no tolerance for gum, candy, or soda in the facility...DO NOT BRING IT TO CLASS!

Individual Equipment

Flutes: Cleaning/Tuning Rod.

Oboes: Two good medium fiber cane reeds and a reed swab.

Clarinets, All Saxes: A minimum of four good reeds (Vandoren Preferred) strength 2 ½, 3, 3 ½ (as the Director advises), reed guard (holds 4 reeds), cork grease, and a cleaning swab.

Trumpets, Baritones, and Tubas: Blue Juice or Al Cass valve oil, mouthpiece brush, and tuning slide grease.

French Horns: Rotary valve oil, a mouthpiece brush, and tuning slide grease.

Trombones: Super Slick slide cream, a mouthpiece brush, and tuning slide grease.

Percussion: Snare Drum Sticks—size 5A, and a stick bag. (The Director may recommend other sticks)

Rehearsal Procedures and Expectations

1. Be in the Band Room before the second bell rings.
2. Bring materials—instrument, music, and pencil.
3. Take only your instrument and music to your chair.
4. Be polite, courteous, and respectful to EVERYONE at all times.
5. Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself.
6. When the rehearsal begins, there will be NO unnecessary talking or playing. Please use appropriate language.
7. Be prepared to play the day's music.
8. If you do not have the music, let the Director know as soon as possible.
9. No gum, food, soda, candy, snacks, etc allowed during lessons or rehearsal.
10. Students may NOT use band rehearsal for study hall—Band is a class for which one receives a grade.
11. Rehearsals will end about three minutes before the bell rings to allow sufficient time to pack up and put away instruments.

Auditions, Seating, and Challenges

1. The Director will assign students to chairs in the various sections of the band according to the student's ability and/or the musical needs of the ensemble.
2. Students who wish to move up in their section may do so by challenging the person directly ahead of them.
3. A player must accept the challenge or lose the chair.
4. Challenges will be over music in the folder and/or music selected by the Director. In case of a tie, the tie will be broken by the Director using additional music.
5. Challenges will be conducted during the class period. Challenges will not be held one month prior to any performance.

Attendance

Regular attendance and participation is important for your daily progress and development.

- The only absences that will be excused for a performance are illness, emergency*, or other circumstances that are discussed with the Director by the parent(s)/guardian(s) at least five days prior to the performance.
- Any unexcused absence from rehearsal or performance could result in one or all of the following: 1) lowering of band grade; 2) loss of one or more chairs in their respective section; 3) dismissal from the band program. Parents will be notified by the office not the Director of student's unexcused absence.

*An emergency is defined as a sudden, unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action. A written or oral explanation/confirmation from parent/guardian should be given to the Director.

Performances

Public performances are SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS just like tests however they CANNOT be made up. The Band Director must be given notice 2 weeks prior to the performance to be missed. If an excuse is received later than 2 weeks, it will result in a 10-page paper from the student. The exceptions are if the student is participating in a band or school related activity, has an illness, or has a death in the family. If the student does not show up and has no prior excuse, it will result in an automatic drop from band.

Extra Rehearsals and Sectionals

It may become necessary to schedule additional band rehearsals or sectionals. These will be posted well in advance to allow students adequate time adjust their schedules. Extra rehearsals are required and may be held after school hours.

Concert Attire

This year's concert attire will require the 7th and the 8th grade band students to purchase a white tuxedo shirt. We are currently working to get the shirts from an online distributor to ease the cost to the students' families. More information will be provided at a later date.

Skirts for all (6th, 7th and 8th grade) girls will be ordered and fitted for correct length, cost will be no more than \$19.00, and payment is due after fitting.

6th Grade Band

Boys: Black slacks, White shirt (collar, buttons all the way down), Black shoes, Black socks.

Girls: White shirt/blouse (collar, buttons all the way down), Black skirt (knee length), Black shoes, Natural stockings.

7th and 8th Grade Bands

Boys: Black slacks, Tuxedo shirt, Black shoes, Black socks.

Girls: Tuxedo shirt, Black skirt (knee length), Black shoes, Natural stockings.

Practice and Private Lessons

It is the students' responsibility to practice and learn his/her assigned lesson and band music. Members who do NOT learn their band parts may NOT be allowed to participate in concerts, assemblies, or band trips. If you are having trouble learning your music, do not hesitate to request assistance from the Director. Private lessons are highly encouraged and a list of good teachers will be provided as the school year starts.

- At least 180 minutes per week of individual practice is expected.

Practice Record Grading Scale

180-210 min. = A

150-179 min. = B

120-149 min. = C

90-119 min. = D

89 min. = F

- Students must return their practice reports each Monday signed by a parent/guardian. Practice reports will be returned to the student the very next day for the report to be used again.
- If the report is one day late, the grade will be lowered by one letter grade. After the second day, it will NOT be accepted and the grade will be an “F”.

The Importance of Discipline

It is expected that each student conduct himself/herself properly with regard to his/her actions, manners, and dress. All band students are expected to demonstrate good discipline—excessive talking, lack of following the rules, talking back to the Director, and a general lack of respect will NOT be tolerated. Because band members are often on display at public concerts, festivals, and performances, each student must always remember that his/her actions represent the band program as well as Edison Middle School.

Parents

Encourage your children throughout the musical learning process. I believe that personal qualities needed to succeed are: A Positive Attitude, Hard Work, and Dedication. They will find that these qualities will transfer over to being a success with anything in life, not just music. I do not expect every one of my students to play professionally or teach music after graduation but I would hope that the skills of goal setting, team work, hard work, dedication, and discipline will stick with them long after they leave Edison Middle School.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your student’s progress, please do not hesitate to email me: lehmanmi@champaignschools.org

******Please Sign and Return by 8-29-08******

I have read and understood the Edison Middle School Band Handbook for the 2008-2009 school year.

Student's Name (printed)_____

Student's Signature_____ **Grade**____ **Instrument**_____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature_____ **Date**_____