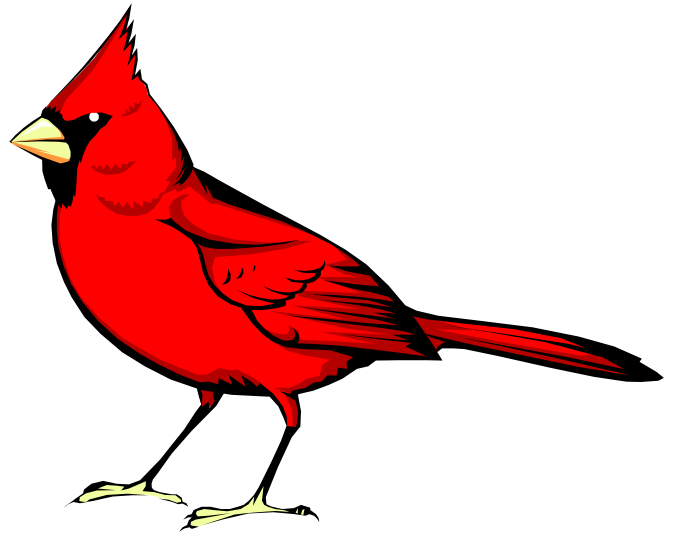


2009 - 2010



**Meridian Junior High
Band
Handbook**

Remove the last three pages and return the Handbook Statement of Understanding by Friday, August 28, 2009. Shirt order forms must be turned in by September 14, 2009. Keep the calendar for your records.

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	3
Philosophy.....	3
Objectives.....	3
Course Offerings.....	4
Illinois State Goals for Music Education.....	4
National Standards for Music Education.....	4
Grading Policies.....	5
Make-Up Work.....	5
Class Rules.....	6
The Band Room.....	6
Consequences for Misbehavior.....	7
Performance Attendance – Band Calendar.....	7
Why Performing Ensembles Require Attendance.....	8
Concert Etiquette.....	9
Self-Discipline.....	9
Instruments.....	10
School-Owned Instrument Rental.....	10
Switching Instruments.....	11
Maintenance of Instruments.....	11
Repairs.....	12
Practice Session Tips.....	13
Instrument Supplies.....	13
Uniform/Band Shirt Policy.....	14
Travel Policies.....	14
IMEA.....	15
Solo & Ensemble Contest.....	14
Summer Camps.....	15
Shirt Order Form.....	16
Statement of Understanding/Information Sheet.....	17

Welcome to the Meridian Junior High Instrumental Music Program!

Learning to play a musical instrument in a precision ensemble is an exciting and challenging event which is not always an easy thing to do. Time and patience are important factors for the parent, students, and teacher. In order to provide the student with the best possible experience which will foster an appreciation of music throughout their lives, I have placed as much pertinent information in this handbook as I can to help you with every aspect of our program. I hope you find the handbook helpful and informative.

During the course of the year if you need help, please do not hesitate to contact me by the following:

Email – meaton@mail.meridian223.org

School Phone – 815-645-2277

Please note that email is my preferred method of contact. It is not possible to answer the phone during class, but I make a point to answer emails promptly – usually within 24 hours, unless it is received over a weekend or holiday in which case I will reply on the next school day. Many situations are better discussed over the phone or in person, and in those instances, I'll be happy to use email to set up a convenient time to hold the conference.

Philosophy

The Meridian Junior High Band Program, with the support of our principal, Mr. William Davidson, operates under the following philosophy:

Our middle school band program is designed to promote a basic understanding and appreciation for music, as well as provide the necessary skills to allow the student to participate in a wide variety of instrumental ensemble settings. Moreover, the student's experiences in our band program will prepare them and motivate them to successfully continue participating in music programs after leaving middle school.

Objectives

1. To help our students develop the technical skills necessary to play a musical instrument both as a solo instrumentalist as well as a member of an ensemble.
2. To help our students develop the skills necessary to read musical notation.
3. To help our students to understand and develop the discipline that is required to successfully play and instrument.
4. To teach our students about the care and maintenance of their instrument.
5. To encourage a sense of responsibility towards the community by emphasizing that in an ensemble, success is measured by the combined effort of many. Teamwork works!
6. To encourage outstanding character and citizenship.
7. To help our students find satisfaction/joy in making music.

Course Offerings

Beginning Band – Primarily 6th grade students just starting out in their playing career. Students will learn assembling their instruments, playing position, tone production, note and rhythm reading, articulations etc. Students will also participate in solo and ensemble contest.

Middle School Concert Bands- For students in 7th and 8th grades. These bands will continue to reinforce previously learned materials and increase their level of playing. Students will also participate in solo and ensemble contest.

Middle School Jazz Band – Available for 7th and 8th grade band members only, the jazz band will offer introduction to jazz style playing concentrating on rhythms and articulations. This course will be offered only if enough student interest is expressed.

Illinois State Goals for Music Education

State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.

- A. Understand the sensory elements, organizational principles and expressive qualities of the arts.

State Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

- A. Understand processes, traditional tools and modern technologies used in the arts.
- B. Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.

STATE GOAL 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

1. Analyze how the arts function in history, society and everyday life.

National Standards for Music Education

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Grading Policies

Quarterly averages are based on grades in six categories:

1. Daily Participation – Students must have all materials and actively participate in class. **5 points each rehearsal**
2. Weekly Lesson – Lessons consist of one small group lesson per week. Students will be graded on attendance and music assignment preparation. Students who are absent for their lesson must make up the lesson within two weeks. Lessons are required. **10 points each lesson**
3. Weekly Practice – Practice Logs are collected on Monday for full credit and will be accepted through Thursday with a deduction of points. Practice logs must be approved and signed by the parent each week or it will not be graded and a grade of zero will be given. **10 points for each week**
4. Performances/Tests – All performances are required and considered playing exams. Additional written and playing exams may be given periodically throughout the nine week grading period. **15 points per play tests**
5. Extra Credit – Any student who attends an instrumental music event or performs outside of school throughout the year can receive 10 points of extra credit per each event. Students must bring in concert program to receive credit.
6. Performances – All band students will be required to perform in all required performances. **50 points each performance** (See page 7)

VERY IMPORTANT – A deduction of five points will be taken from a student's daily participation grade each time the student forgets their instrument at home and any time a student comes to class missing any of the required materials for class. However, if the student's instrument is in the repair shop points will not be deducted as long as a written note from a parent is received.

Make-up Work

If a student is absent for any reason, he/she is responsible for finding out what work he or she missed. If the absence results in a missed test of some sort, the student is responsible for making up the grade within three days. Only students with excused absences will be allowed to make-up test grades.

If absent from school, lessons may be made up at any time during the week after the missed absence. The student may do this before or after school any day or during lunch recess. (Arrangements should be made with the director in advance.)

If you practice, you get better.
If you get better, you play with better players.
If you play with better players, you play better music.
If you play better music, you have more fun.
If you have more fun, you want to practice more.
If you practice more, you get better...

Douglas Yeo, *Parenting Musical Children*

Class Rules

1. If a student has something that he/she needs to discuss with a director please do so before or after school or immediately following class. Directors will not be available before a student's class for questions, except in extreme emergencies.
2. Students must be in their seats with their instrument, pencils, music, and any other required materials by the time the tardy bell rings.
3. Students are not permitted to converse with each other once the director has begun class.
4. Treat our band room with respect (help pick up and keep band room clean).

The Band Room

We consider the Meridian Junior High Band Room our working home during the day and hope that our band students will feel as comfortable making music here as we do. At the same time we are committed to preserving the condition of our instruments and equipment for many years to come. We want our students to both enjoy the room and the program's equipment while treating it with the respect it deserves. With this in mind, the following rules will establish our expectation for everyone in the band hall.

- The band room will be open at 7:30 a.m. in the morning allowing students to store their instruments in their assigned location for the school day.
- Students may come to the band room to practice at 7:30 a.m. or after school until 3:00 p.m., only if they are playing their instruments or in some other way involved in music (i.e. practice, sectional rehearsal, small ensemble, lessons, using Smart Music or other music programs on the computer) **We strongly encourage this!** Students will be asked to leave if they are in any way disturbing the director or other students.
- No students are allowed in the band room without the presence of a director or other staff member.
- Students need to be invited before entering the Directors' office. Knocking on the door or asking politely is the best way of accomplishing this.
- All instruments should be stored in their assigned place and music put in assigned slot.
- While it may be very tempting, students may not touch another student's instrument or school equipment (including percussion equipment) without permission.
- No food or drink OR GUM in the band room.
- No running or rough play in the band room.
- Treat each other with respect and kindness. Music is a social endeavor. Let's get along and work together.

Consequences For Misbehavior

Students will lose daily participation points and/or be assigned a detention for any of the following infractions:

1. Talking in class
2. Being out of seat without permission
3. Chewing gum, eating food or drink in the band room without approval
4. Abusing music stands, equipment, or any other school property
5. Running or horseplay in the band room
6. Tardiness
7. Handling another students instrument

VERY IMPORTANT – Students will receive ONE warning for any misbehavior that occurs. After that, any infraction will result in a loss of daily participation points. If misbehavior continues, a student will be sent to the office and issued a detention. We will follow all Meridian Junior High discipline policies. (See handbook for details.) If a student's non-participation is the result of not having an instrument or needed materials for class, no warning is given and daily participation points will not be given.

Performance Attendance – Band Calendar

Attendance at all band performances is required.

A calendar of the band activities for the year is available below.. Please mark these on your calendar to avoid any scheduling conflict. We will notify you as soon as possible of any changes to the calendar.

Conflicts with outside activities will result in the loss of the performance grade. Personal or family emergencies are excused with a written note from the parent explaining the nature of the emergency.

Students with excused absences will need to complete a make-up assignment to receive the performance points.

The Meridian School's website at www.meridian223.org is a great place to go for updates to the calendar and information on band activities.

CONCERT DATES

October 13	Tuesday	Fall Concert	Large gym	6:00, 6:45, 7:30 pm
October 17	Saturday	IMEA Auditions	Sterling H.S.	TBA**
November 21	Saturday	IMEA District Festival	Dekalb (NIU)	TBA**
Dec. 14	Monday	Winter Concert	Large Gym	6:00, 6:45, 7:30 pm
Feb. 4	Thursday	Stillbucks Coffeehouse	H.S. Aux. Gym	7:00 pm
Feb. 6	Saturday	Solo & Ens. Contest	Stillman V. HS	TBA **
April 12	Monday	Organizational Contest	Byron MS	TBA
May 11	Tuesday	Spring Concert	Large Gym	6:00, 6:45, 7:30 pm
May 15	Saturday	8 th Grade Field Trip (perf.)	Great America	TBA

**Not required performances

All 6th grade concerts will start at 6 pm, 7th grade concerts at 6:45 pm, & 8th grade concerts will start at 7:30 pm.

Why Performing Ensembles Require Attendance

1. The opportunity to perform for a public audience is an integral part of the curriculum that cannot be taught, provided, or experienced during the school day. For those who are not present to perform, the educational conditions present in a performance cannot be effectively recreated at a future time. Having a student play the concert or marching music after the performance may measure a student's ability to play correct notes and rhythms, but it is otherwise useless.

Missed completely is the measurement of the ability to control and develop skills such as balance, blend, intonation, adjustment to the audience, recovery from nervous anxiety, and adjustments to one's own and other's mistakes.

2. Performances are exams! This is the means with which we as music teachers measure and evaluate the group performance class. If we as music educators compromise this requirement, it merely serves to chip away at the importance of not only the individual, but the worthiness of our subject area.

Teachers want each performance to be at its best; failure to insist on full attendance hampers the ability of the entire group. It makes for the perception that it is only "extra-curricular" and not really that important. Extra curricular applies to those activities not taught during the school day...such as clubs and sporting activities.

5. In most regular classrooms, student's ability to perform, as well as the success of the overall class performance, is NOT usually damaged by a single absence. In fact, a better student-teacher ratio exists if fewer students are in the classroom.

In music ensembles, however, a single absence impairs the other students' ability, morale, and group reputation. When even one person is missing it does affect balance, blend, intonation, and technical proficiency.

To preserve the quality of the performance, the morale of the entire ensemble, and the dignity and integrity of the educational values, attendance must be required.

6. If a student is absence without cause and no penalty/punishment is given, the morale and dedication of the other ensemble members will decrease. This, of course, leads to many other problems including more absenteeism.

Concert Etiquette

A Musical Performance is not an athletic event. Total quiet is not only needed out of respect for the performers, but for the music to be totally appreciated.

During a performance, please refrain from conversation and remove crying children from the performance area.

Entering and exiting during a performance is also very distracting to the performers and shows a lack of respect for their efforts. Please remain seated until the performance is over. Please listen to all performers, not just your children.

While pictures are a wonderful memento of the event, the photographer can be distracting to the performers. Please take pictures from a respectable distance.

Our students work hard to prepare for a performance and exhibit a remarkable level of talent. Show your appreciation by responding with applause when appropriate. They deserve it!

Self-Discipline

The most important element in any worthwhile endeavor, especially in learning an instrument, is self-discipline. A successful band student demonstrates a developing sense of self-discipline through:

1. Personal practice on one's instrument
2. High behavior standards
3. Positive attitude
4. Dedication to the cause of the program
5. Effort
6. Loyalty to the group

Instruments

It is vital to the success of the student and the band program that all students have good quality, well playing instruments. For this reason, we ask that students rent or purchase their instruments from a reputable music dealer. Instruments purchased from discount stores or from the internet without consultation of the director will not be allowed in the band program.

School-Owned Instrument Rental

Although there are a small number of school-owned instruments available for student loan, it is strongly recommended that the student provide his/her own. Smaller school-owned instruments such as flutes, clarinets, trumpets, and saxophones come from a variety of sources (donations, etc.) and are of varying degrees of quality, playability, and decay. All larger instruments such as tuba, baritone horn, and bass clarinet are provided by the school but again, quantities are limited.

Parents will be asked to sign a contract including the condition of the instrument. Any damage to the instrument that is considered beyond normal wear and tear will have to be charged for repairs by the students. The Band Director will determine what is considered excessive wear and tear.

A properly maintained instrument will not have broken parts or dents. Dents and busted joints are caused by student negligence. Students are given cases and instrument shelves to protect their instruments.

The Directors have the right to refuse rental to any student who has a history of excessive damage to horns. That student then has the option of renting or purchasing that horn from one of the local music companies.

It is our desire that all students who want to participate in the band program can regardless of financial need. Please contact the director so we can help your child participate.

Switching Instruments

Students are generally not allowed to switch instruments after their Beginning Band year. There are only a few instances where a student will be allowed to play on an instrument other than what they were selected for in Beginner Band...

1. Physical or Medical need. If a student develops a physical or medical condition that makes it hard to play their original instrument, then the directors will do all we can to find an instrument that this student will be successful with.
2. Band Need. Middle School bands use a few instruments that are not taught at the beginner level. A few well-qualified students may be approached about switching to these instruments. Generally, these instruments are within the same family as their original instrument. For example, some Clarinet players may be asked to move to Bass Clarinet in middle school.
3. Jazz Band will also present a few students with the opportunity to play an instrument other than the one they play in their regular band class. Jazz Band members and instrument are selected by the Band Directors.

Maintenance of Instruments

All music students are required to maintain their instrument in proper working order, regardless of ownership.

1. Reed players must provide their own cork grease, and cleaning cloths or swabs and should use them regularly. Reeds in good condition must be used at all times.
2. Brass players must provide their own valve or slide oil, grease, brushes and cleaning snakes and should use them regularly.
3. Percussion players should have all necessary sticks in good condition.

Since most problems with instrument occur through accident, misuse, or neglect, I can't stress the importance of respecting and maintaining one's instrument enough. If the student will take the minimum time and care required of the instrument on a daily basis, most problems can be avoided almost indefinitely. Instruments are not toys – they are delicate and sensitive devices.

Repairs

Even with the best of intention, accidents do occur at times. In the case of a school district-owned instrument, the school district will repair it at no cost to the student at the discretion of the music director. If the director observes or believes that the damage occurred through abuse, neglect, or misconduct on the part of the student, the student will be charged for repair or replacement of the instrument. Students who rent or own their own instruments must make every effort to have the damaged instrument repaired as soon as a problem is identified. If the student will not have the use of an instrument for any period of time, written notification or email from the parent will be required to excuse that student. If the student is not excused from participation in rehearsals due to lack of an instrument or the non-playability of the instrument, the student will not receive their daily participation points.

Students are required to have an instrument that is in working (playing) condition at all times. If an instrument gets broken, it is the responsibility of that family to take the instrument to a repair shop to be fixed. A note needs to be sent to school to explain that the instrument is in the shop.

The band director recommends the following repair facility. If you have difficulties with the repair facility, please let the director know immediately. We want your child's instrument repaired correctly the first time and we will help resolve any conflicts with the repair shop.

Guzzardo Performance Music
3010 Charles St.
Rockford, IL
1-800-747-0480

If you would like your instrument sent to Guzzardo Music, they will be at school on Thursday mornings. Please send a note authorizing the director to send it to the repair shop. It is the parent responsibility to pay for any repairs needed.

***Students will only truly love and enjoy band if they practice.
Though class time is very valuable, home practice is
essential.***

Practice Session Tips

The importance of regular practice cannot be stressed enough. There is no way for a student to learn to play an instrument without actually playing it!! These tips can help your child develop productive practice sessions.

1. Try to establish a DAILY practice that is free from distractions (TV, Nintendo, brother, sisters, irate neighbor, etc.)
2. Don't make practicing optional – homework isn't!
3. Practice sessions should average 20 – 30 minutes. Less than that does not allow for much to be accomplished.
4. Have your child perform for you. Be supportive and offer LOTS of encouragement. Learning an instrument is hard at first and kids will have periods of discouragement or loss of interest. Help them recognize that this is normal and is not a reason to give up.

Instrument Supplies

The band director keeps a number of basic instrument supplies on hand for students to purchase. Supplies can also be ordered. All supplies and accessories must be paid for at time of purchase. Students will not be allowed to charge supplies.

We also recommend you use the following company for all your instrument supply needs.

Guzzardo Performance Music
3010 Charles St. Rockford, IL
1-800-747-0480

Students should have the following supplies at all times:

Clarinet and Saxophone students must have 3 playable reeds in the appropriate strength, cork grease, and a cleaning swab in their case at all times.

Oboe and Bassoon students must have a cleaning swab and 2 playable reeds in their case at all times.

Flute students will need to have a soft polish cloth, cleaning swab, and flute rod.

All Brass students are expected to have a soft polish cloth, oil, cream, water bottle, and mouthpiece brush as it pertains to your instrument.

Percussion students should own a practice pad with stand, bell set, stick bag, snare sticks (SD1 – general), hard plastic keyboard mallets (general purpose), and timpani mallets (general purpose).

Uniform/Band Shirt Policy

1. **Band Shirts:** Band shirts will be worn for all concerts and contest/festivals.
2. Band shirts will be TUCKED IN at all times.
3. It is the student's responsibility to clean the shirt as needed.
4. Additionally, you will need a pair of black dress pants, black shoes and black socks as part of the uniform. Ladies may wear appropriate length skirts (below the knee) as long as they wear black nylons or tights

VERY IMPORTANT – If a student is having trouble acquiring any part of the required uniform, the director should be notified at least one week prior to the event so the director can help the student get the necessary attire.

If you have an old band shirt, black pants or black shoes you can no longer use, we would be happy to accept donations for families in need!

NOTE: All students must be in uniform to perform and receive a grade!!

Travel Policies

Occasionally it will be necessary to travel from place to place in a bus. We will use the following policies to insure the safety of our students and instruments.

1. Boarding and exiting buses -- Students will not board until instructed to do so. Students will remain on the bus and seated until instructed otherwise.
2. General conduct -- No foul or abusive language or gestures are permitted. Quiet talking is permitted. Keep your arms, hands, feet, etc. inside the bus at all times.
YELLING IS NOT PERMITTED. THIS MAY CAUSE SERIOUS ACCIDENTS!
3. Loading of equipment -- All students are responsible to see that their own equipment and music is loaded onto the bus.
4. Eating, drinking, etc. -- No eating or drinking of any kind will be allowed because of the normal bus procedures. Sack lunches are allowed but drinks and food must remain in proper storage at all times.
5. Electronics -- We are not responsible for stolen items.
6. Chaperones -- Respect at all times the sponsors who will be going with us on trips.
7. Bus riding requirements -- When a bus is provided, all students will ride the bus both ways. On special occasions, such as return from a band trip, students may be released to a parent or guardian only by a band director. Parents must sign a release form.
8. Band directors reserve the right to assign seats for all bus trips.

IMEA

Students will have the opportunity to audition for the Illinois Music Educators Association (IMEA) District Festival. Auditions will be held in October. Students must turn in the IMEA Audition permission slip. The school will pay for the audition fee as long as the student auditions. If the student fails to complete the audition process, he/she will be responsible for the audition fee.

Solo & Ensemble Contest

Students will have the opportunity to compete in the Rt. 72 Solo and Ensemble Contest in February. Students must turn in the contest permission slip. The director will assist the student in picking appropriate music for the student. Students are responsible for practicing the music and rehearsing with their accompanist. If a student signs up for the contest but does not attend, he/she will be responsible for the entry fee.

Summer Camps

Several area colleges/universities offer summer band camps (usually one week long). The band staff believes these camps are very beneficial to students. Contact the band office in the spring if interested. There may also be camps available locally.

Meridian Junior High School

Band/Choir Shirt Order Form

NOTE: Returning students may use their shirt from last year or purchase a new one.

Dear Music Parent,

The official band/choir shirt is worn by all students for performances throughout the year. The shirt is a white, short sleeve T shirt. There is an red and blue music logo embroidered on the front left chest. The shirt is available in **Adult sizes** (S, M, L, XL, XXL) and **Youth sizes** (S, M, L, XL) You will need to add \$2.00 for the XXL size shirts. **PLEASE MAKE SURE TO INDICATE ADULT OR YOUTH SIZE.**

The cost of the shirt is \$6.00 and can be paid with a check payable to Meridian CUSD #223. When ordering your child's shirt, please keep in mind that the shirt is being worn to create a uniform appearance and **will be tucked in**. Even though some students may like wearing oversized shirts, this shirt will actually need to fit. The shirt will be worn with long black dress pants/slacks, dark dress shoes, and black socks. **All 8th grade students will need to purchase a polo shirt which are \$12.00.**

The shirt orders will be placed on September 15th so that all shirts will be ready for the first performance. Please check the band calendar (included in this packet) to see when your child has their first performance.

Please fill out the information below and return this form no later that **September 15, 2008.**

Band/Choir Shirt Order Form

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Circle shirt size and indicate quantity.

Circle One: **ADULT** or **YOUTH**

S _____ M _____ L _____ XL _____ XXL _____

Total Number of Shirts _____ @ \$6.00 (\$12.00) = _____ (Add \$2.00 for
XXL)

Total Amount Paid \$ _____

All order forms and checks should be turned in to the band director or to the main office.

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

HANDBOOK STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Please initial each line to verify you have read our policies:

	<i>Student's Initials</i>	<i>Parent's Initials</i>
Grading Policies (pg. 5)	_____	_____
Class and band hall rules and regulations (pg. 6)	_____	_____
Performance Attendance policy (pg. 7)	_____	_____
Concert Etiquette (pg. 9)	_____	_____
Uniform requirements (pg. 15)	_____	_____
Commitments as outlined in the 2008-2009 calendar (pg. 7) Oct. 13, Dec. 14, Feb. 4, April 12, May 11.	_____	_____

I have read and understand all of the information from the Meridian Junior High School Handbook and agree to abide by the stated policies:

Student Signature x _____

Parent/Guardian Signature x _____

Date _____

Parent Information Sheet

Father's Name _____ Mother's Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Father's Work Phone _____ Mother's Work Phone _____

Email address_____

Student's birthday_____