



# *Pennfield Bands*

*Student Handbook 2009-2010*

# **Pennfield Bands Student Handbook**

## **Preface**

This handbook has been written to help students gain the most from their band experience as well as provide guidance to the practical everyday experiences of the band program.

The success of the band program centers on pride, commitment to task, and the willingness to work hard to achieve a common goal. It is not expected every student in the band program becomes a virtuoso musician. Every student is expected to establish both short and long range goals for improvement on his/her instrument, to exhibit mature responsible attitudes and actions at all times, and to be willing to contribute lots of hard work for the benefit of all.

The band program exists to provide an excellent music education for the students. This is achieved through individual study and varied performances in many venues (both marching and concert) supporting a curriculum that places an emphasis on comprehensive musicianship. Performance opportunities include large ensembles, chamber ensembles, and solos. The skills that band students acquire in these activities are directly related to skills necessary for auditions, presentations, and interviews in other career fields.

The band program also will develop a student's social skills. Participation in band enables the students to form close friendships within the school through their collaborative efforts. It also provides the opportunity to work with their peers as part of a team. As a member of the Pennfield Band, students make long-lasting friendships and develop a sense of camaraderie that is unique to our organization. There will be many opportunities for musical fellowship and fun through participation in band. Organizational goals are clearly established, and the students depend heavily on each other to achieve them. As a result, the concepts of responsibility, teamwork, and good citizenship will develop as each student experiences the world of music.

The ultimate goal of the program is to produce graduates who are knowledgeable about music, can perform successfully with confidence, can operate within a structured framework, and can work to develop the skills necessary to become a life long musician. In addition, the program also strives to produce informed adults of high integrity who understand and appreciate music and musicians, and who will foster the continuing developments of artistic endeavors in their community.

**"WE REHEARSE COLLECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE WHAT NONE OF US ARE ABLE  
TO ACCOMPLISH INDIVIDUALLY"**

## Objectives for Participation

To provide the student with a sound education in the fundamentals of musical technique and expression.

To broaden the musical experience of the student through the performance of quality literature from many different musical periods and styles.

To encourage the application of the creative and critical thinking processes developed in music to other activities in the life of the student.

To encourage the development of self-discipline, responsibility, leadership, and communication skills through the application of these attributes to band activities.

To provide positive experiences that will promote lifelong musical participation.

To provide a focal point for school and community pride and spirit.

## Student Leadership Positions

Students in leadership positions undertake these tasks understanding their vital importance to the success of the band. They understand there may be considerable time spent outside of band class and during the school day on these positions. They agree to make themselves available for such times.

**Band President (HS)** -- The band president serves as the primary student leader for the group. This person is selected by the other students on the basis of musical excellence and personal integrity. Responsibilities include consultation with the band directors, announcing at concerts, student conducting as needed, and responsible leadership whenever a director is not immediately present.

**Drum Major (HS)** -- Drum majors are selected each spring by the band director on the basis of marching and playing skill and potential for leadership. Drum majors are the student leaders of the marching band, and are figures of authority both on and off the field. Beyond field command, responsibilities also include conducting, sectional rehearsal as needed, and being an exemplary example of bandsmanship.

**Section Leader (HS, MS)** -- Section leaders are the musical leaders of their respective sections, and are selected by the director on the basis of playing skill and leadership potential. Responsibilities include independent scheduling and direction of sectional rehearsals, musical guidance in rehearsal, uniform inspections, and being an excellent example of musicianship and work ethic.

**Squad Leader (HS)** -- Squad leaders are in charge of the marching and playing of a squad, of four members, of the marching band, and are selected by the directors on the basis of playing and

marching skill as well as leadership potential. Responsibilities include independent scheduling and direction of squad drill sectionals and continuing on-field guidance.

**Equipment Managers (HS)** -- Equipment managers are in charge of large instruments such as percussion and sousaphones when the band travels. They manage the loading and unloading of these instruments and keep the director informed of issues concerning this equipment. Up to three students may be selected for this leadership position.

**Music Librarian (HS, MS)** – The librarian will hand out, collect, and sort music. They will become familiar with the music storage room and are charged with keeping it organized. He/she is to keep track of replacement parts issued and report to the director.

**Band Historian (HS, MS)** – The band historian takes pictures and videos of band at certain times during the school year. They may be excused from playing their instrument at certain times to perform their historian duties. This should be a student interested in photography and videography and who is skilled in the computer aided presentation of band events.

**Band Booster Liaison (HS)** – This student attends band booster meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month and updates the boosters on band events and how the boosters can help the students. This requires a time commitment outside of the school day. There will be an alternate for this position.

**Band Public Relations (HS, MS)**—This is a student committee responsible for concert invitations, publicity, and the overall marketing of the band and their events.

## Music

Music will be handed out with the intent that it will not be lost or damaged. Students will write their name with pencil on the back of their music.

Replacement of sheet music will be made in an emergency, but is not the priority of the director. It's a waste of time for other band members and the director to have to replace music. **TAKE CARE OF YOUR MUSIC!** Consistent failure to adhere to this policy will affect a student's grade. Students are spending the band's money when they need replacement music.

Mark music lightly in pencil so that it can be erased when it's turned in.

Upon music distribution, number all measures immediately. In some cases, students will be spot checked for numbering.

Students will be issued a folder in which to keep their band music. Through use, these folders degrade and new folders will be handed out free of charge.

# Uniforms

## (High School Band)

Uniforms play a very important part in the public perception and pride of the community, the band, and each of its individual students. The Pennfield Bands maintain a long-standing tradition of pride and self-discipline in uniform presentation.

Uniforms are issued prior to the marching and concert seasons. Students must wear only the uniform parts issued by the school. Only members of the Pennfield band are authorized to wear any part of the uniform. The uniform should be worn only for authorized band activities. Marching shoes are purchased by the student through the school to insure uniformity, and must be kept clean and polished to maintain their bright white appearance.

Non-uniform items such as decorative/humorous buttons, festival medals, sunglasses, etc. should not be worn with the band uniform. Students with longer hair will be required to wear it up under the hat--hair should not touch the collar. No jewelry should be worn with the band uniform.

***Whenever a student has been instructed to wear the uniform, and appears in public, the complete uniform will be worn.***

"In public" means in the public view, whether it be going out of the house, walking down the street, getting out of a car, or performing with the band. The band room and adjacent bathrooms are available for changing and are not considered in the public view. At no time should the uniform be worn unbuttoned, unfastened, or partially on or off. This applies to both the concert and marching uniforms.

***Students are responsible for adjustment of the hems and sleeves of the uniform.***

Pants should be adjusted so that the bottom front of the pant leg comes all of the way down to the shoe without causing a "break" in the pleat on the front of the ankle. Sleeves should be adjusted so that they extend just to the palm of the hand when the student stands in the "attention" position. Alterations to pant and skirt hems and jacket sleeves are encouraged, but more extensive alterations should be discussed with the director.

***The uniform and all of its parts must be clean and wrinkle-free for all public appearances.***

None of the parts of the uniform issued by the school are machine washable. It is the responsibility of the student to hang up the uniform immediately after each use, and to dry-clean the uniform as needed during the school year. Dry cleaning is required before turning the uniform back in. *Any uniform parts turned in must be accompanied by a receipt from the dry cleaner to confirm that they have been cleaned. Uniforms turned in dirty or without proof of cleaning will be subject to a \$20.00 cleaning fine per uniform* (the concert and marching units are considered separate uniforms--separate cleaning fees apply to each).

# Uniforms (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

The band uniform is a physical manifestation of your pride in yourself and our organization.

**6th grade band members will need the following for the fall, winter, and spring concerts:**

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls</b>
Black Dress Pants (JEANS are NOT acceptable.)	Black Dress/Skirt/Dress Pants (Skirt or dress must be BELOW the knee when seated.)
Black Dress Shoes (TENNIS SHOES are NOT acceptable.)	Black Socks/Nylons
Black Socks	Black Dress Shoes/Pumps (NO FLIP FLOPS OR SANDALS)
White-collared Dress Shirt (Polo shirts are acceptable.)	White dress shirt or blouse (Polo shirts are acceptable.)

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade band students will purchase a Pennfield Middle School Band Polo shirt at the beginning of the school year. The student will supply the rest of the concert uniform.**

<b>7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys and Girls</b>
Pennfield Middle School Band Polo
Black Dress Pants (JEANS are NOT acceptable.)
Black Socks
Black Dress Shoes (TENNIS SHOES are NOT acceptable.)

\*Please begin planning for your uniform immediately. If you have any questions or financial concerns please see Mr. Driver immediately.

## General Conduct/Expectations

Band members will observe all policies set forth by Pennfield Schools, in addition to the following (as they pertain to the instrumental setting):

1. All students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all times. Display of profanity, temper, flagrant violation of rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the group.
2. Students will follow any director's instructions.
3. Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time.
4. Students will bring all equipment including music, pencil, instrument, and all supplies to rehearsals daily.
5. Students will keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
6. Students will maintain a high level of good and acceptable behavior.
7. Students will bring no food, drinks, candy or gum in the band room. Water in a sealed container is acceptable. Food provided by the band or the band boosters is an exception.
8. Students will not play on equipment they do not own or do not have permission from a director to use. Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
9. Students should ask for permission to speak by raising your hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be quiet so that our time will be utilized wisely.
10. Students will respect the property of others, and return their equipment to its proper storage place when not in use.
11. Students will not enter the director's office without permission.
12. Students will not deface or mark on music stands, walls, doors, equipment, etc.
- 13. Any behavior, which is not representative of good citizenship, as perceived by the band staff, may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand as well as the band program.**

## Grading Policy for 2009-2010

**ALL WORK AND INTERACTION IN PENNFIELD BANDS IS BASED ON A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF RESPECT AND TEAMWORK**

**A Student's grade is earned in the following manner:**

<i>Daily Contribution</i>	25%
This includes music preparation, materials, attitude, and the student's overall contribution to the rehearsal on a daily basis.	
<i>Playing Tests</i>	45% (HS) 40% (MS)
<i>Pennfield Bands Performance Attendance</i>	20%
<i>CD Report or Concert Attendance (HS)</i>	10%
<i>Practice Cards (Grades 6-8)</i>	15%

Students will be issued a card at the beginning of each semester and this card will be checked by one of the directors on each Friday, or the next day of school if there is a Friday off. Students are allowed a 3 day grace period to receive full credit on their cards, but it is their responsibility to get their card checked.

\*There is not a practice card requirement in high school. It is expected that high school band students take the individual responsibility to practice and prepare their parts.

## CD Report/Concert Report (HS only)

As stated in our curriculum goals, students should become listeners to all types of music as part of their band experience. Each semester, students will write about a CD they have listened to or a concert they've attended. See details below.

### **CD REPORT**

A student will choose one of the following:

1. A CD, which features the instrument of the student, approved by Mr. Driver
2. A CD of concert band or orchestra, approved by Mr. Driver
3. A CD of a movie soundtrack, approved by Mr. Driver
4. A CD of a musical or opera, approved by Mr. Driver
5. Other CD's must be approved by Mr. Driver

The CD report is a write-up of specific musical attributes heard throughout the CD, such as dynamics, phrasing, balance, intonation, articulation, etc. The report must be at least 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12.

## CONCERT ATTENDANCE REPORT:

1. A live concert performance that features the main instrument of the student, approved by Mr. Driver. WMU and other surrounding colleges and universities have many free concerts throughout the year.
2. A live concert performance of any of the symphony orchestras in Michigan.  
(i.e. Battle Creek Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, Detroit Symphony)
3. Other Performances – MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY MR. DRIVER.

The concert report is a write-up of specific musical attributes heard throughout the concert, such as dynamics, phrasing, balance, intonation, articulation, etc. The report must be at least 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12.

Do not wait until the last minute to attend a concert. You will need to plan ahead to ensure that there are concerts to attend prior to the end of the semester. No exceptions will be made for not planning ahead.

## PENNFIELD BANDS PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Unexcused absence from extra rehearsals and performances will be addressed on two levels as follows:

**Level One --** Tuesday Evening Marching Rehearsals  
All Middle School Performances

The marking period grade will be lowered by *one full letter grade* for each unexcused absence from a level one performance.

**Level Two --** Marching Festivals    District Band Festival  
Home Football Marching Performances  
Winter Concert            Pre-Festival Concert  
Spring Concert            High School Graduation

The marking period grade will be lowered by *two full letter grades* for each unexcused absence from a level two performance.

A calendar of band events for the year has been distributed to every student and is available on the band website.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts with other school activities before they occur. If you discover a conflict, see Mr. Driver **as soon as possible**.

Very few excuses will be accepted for missing any band activity. Please realize that the further ahead of the event that we are informed of a conflict, the more time we have to compensate for the possible absence of the student. Severe illness and death in the family are automatically excused, but a phone call would be appreciated if possible. Decisions concerning excused absences will be made at the discretion of the directors, with consultation with administrators if necessary.

Excuses **after the fact** (except for extreme emergencies) will not be accepted.

## **Band Communication**

It is vital that we have up to date contact information for students; this includes their home number, parents' cell phone numbers, and emergency contact information. Although Zangle is utilized, please make sure the band office has this very important and current information.

Email is the most efficient and timely way to contact Mr. Driver or Mr. Dixon, and for us to contact you in non-emergency situations. In most cases, your emails will be answered within 24 hours. Please put your student's name in the subject line. Besides email, you can call the band office phone number and leave a message at 961-9779. It is the same number for both middle school and high school. Please do not call during class times.

The Band Website, administered by Mr. Dixon, is the best way to stay up to date with band events. Here you can read and print the master calendar, the handbooks, practice cards, and also link to band recordings and pictures.

Mr. Driver's email: [driverb@pennfield.net](mailto:driverb@pennfield.net)

Mr. Dixon's email: [dixonc@pennfield.net](mailto:dixonc@pennfield.net)

## **SMS Twitter Band Headlines System**

In addition to our email system, we also utilize SMS (or Text) messaging as an option. Whenever important info needs to be distributed, last minute changes arise, or important deadlines come up, we will send out an SMS to everyone enrolled in the Headlines Feed. Here are some examples of how we will use the system.

- Marching Rehearsal has been cancelled due to weather.
- Reminder: Band Registration this Saturday.
- It is 11:00pm and we are just leaving festival. Estimated return time to CHS is now 11:45pm.
- The Band has arrived back at school. Students are ready to be picked up.

In order to setup your SMS notifications:

- 1) Go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and set up a free account.
- 2) Once you are logged in, click on "Take Twitter with you - Set up your mobile phone" in the box on the right side of the screen.
- 2) Follow the instructions to set up your phone. Make sure you enter your phone number preceded by a + and 1 (ex. +14696335630).
- 3) Once your phone is set up, go to [www.twitter.com/phsband](http://www.twitter.com/phsband)
- 5) Click the box that says "Follow"
- 6) Click on the box that says "Following - Device Updates Off" and change the selection to "on" And you are all set! From now on you will receive Text Message Notifications from the CHS Band. If you want to stop receiving messages from the band, simply reply to any message with OFF.

**What Does it Mean to Be a Pennfield Band Member?**  
**Pennfield Band Member/Family Contract**

When you join the Pennfield Band, you are becoming a part of an organization legacy of excellence, built on the dedication and hard work of its directors, parents, and members. In order for such a large organization to operate at the level which we strive to achieve, it takes cooperation from all three parts of the Pennfield Band family. As a result of this cooperation, you will make friends and memories that will last a lifetime; you will achieve outstanding musical accomplishments; you will learn the value of hard work; you will be an integral part of something excellent.

Understand up front, however, that all of this comes at a price. As parents and students, by joining the Pennfield Band, you are entering to this agreement:

As your directors, we agree to:

- Work tirelessly to provide you with the absolute best that band and music has to offer.
- Set **very high** goals for the students, and then **enable** the students to meet them.
- Always challenge you to be better in all you do.
- Do our absolute best to put the students in a position to excel.
- Demand academic excellence.
- Clearly communicate our schedule and our expectations.

As students, you agree to:

- Give 110% in each and every rehearsal.
- Arrive prepared to every performance or rehearsal.
- Communicate any schedule conflicts as far in advance as possible.
- Pass your classes. This is a team effort - passing your classes is not an option.
- Demonstrate personal responsibility.
- Uphold the tradition of excellence in all that we do.

As parents, you agree to:

- Provide timely transportation for your student so that he/she arrives early to all band events.
- Maintain an open line of communication with the staff about any schedule conflicts or concerns that you might have. Feel free to contact us at any time using the contact information above.
- Be an integral part of the Band Family by attending performances, rehearsals, and by participating in our volunteer efforts.

**\*Please sign and return this entire page by September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009\***

**“I have read and understand the Pennfield Band Handbook, including the policies, expectations, and the band’s schedule of performances, and agree to partner with the directors, other students and families, and Pennfield Administration in order to achieve success in the Pennfield Band program.**

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Director Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_