

2023-2024

Downing Middle School

Band Handbook



Mary Clardy, Band Director
Kennan Wylie, Percussion Instructor
Tyler Coffman, Low Brass Instructor
Curtis Martin, Principal
Brandie Harycki, Assistant Principal

About This Handbook

This handbook is a resource of information on the policies and activities of the Downing Middle School Band program. This document is issued to band members and parents to provide basic information regarding the program. All band members and parents are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the contents of this handbook, and must complete and return the enclosed Band Handbook Acceptance Form in order to participate in the Downing Band. This handbook is designed to function in harmony with the LISD Student Code of Conduct and LISD Board policies.

This handbook is a living document. The band directors or campus administrators retain the authority to amend band policies if such action is deemed necessary to secure the interest of the overall band program.

Downing Band Philosophy of Instrumental Music Education

Music is a subject that affects many facets of the human personality. It shapes individuals on an intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and social level. Instrumental music can foster a lifelong appreciation of music as an art form. Instrumental music also fosters a sense of cultural awareness as well as an aesthetic appreciation for the arts. The Downing Band program engages students in a group activity that can enrich their life, personally and socially. It develops proper work habits through the successful implementation of a daily practice routine. It develops confidence and promotes students' abilities of self-expression and intelligent listening skills that encourage heightened communication skills. It is a departmental goal to instill in every member of the Downing Band a lifelong appreciation for music and to consistently embrace the ideals of self-discipline, commitment, and teamwork. Through the cooperation of band students, parents, campus administration, the community, and the Lewisville Independent School District, the Downing Band will strive to provide a musical program that is consistently recognized as one of the finest of its kind.

Downing Band Directors' Mission Statement

The Downing Band will provide a quality performing arts experience, instill a sense of community among its members, and encourage each member to strive for personal and group excellence. The Downing Band Directors will provide an environment in which young people can develop strong character, become excellent all-around students, and grow into wonderful musicians who will have a life-long love for music.

Contact Information:

Mrs. Clardy - clardym@lisd.net	972-350-1456
Mr. Wylie - wyliek@lisd.net	469-948-7197
Mr. Coffman - coffmant@lisd.net	

Mrs. Clardy's conference period is during 3rd period. I will make every effort to return parent calls and e-mails within twenty-four hours. To set up a conference with Mr. Coffman or Mr. Wylie, please email them directly.

Course Descriptions

The Downing Middle School Bands are made up of the Beginning Band Classes and an Advanced Band, also known as the Downing Symphonic Band.

Beginning Band

Students will begin to learn tools such as self-discipline, individual responsibility, group responsibility, how to set and achieve goals, and how to work with others in a large group. These skills will be beneficial to them not only as band members, but also as developing young students. Musically, our goal is to provide students with the necessary tools to function at a high level in their future years as musicians. There are nine different classes of beginners that meet during six different periods during the school day. Classes are made up of like instruments in order to enhance more uniform instruction. Mrs. Clardy teaches most beginning classes,

Mr. Coffman teaches beginning low brass (trombone, euphonium and tuba) and Mr. Wylie, percussion specialist from Marcus High School, teaches beginning percussion.

Symphonic Band

The Symphonic Band is made up of seventh and eighth graders and is to be regarded as an honors class. Students in the Symphonic Band will be prepare audition material for the District and Region Band in the Fall semester.

In the spring semester, students in the Symphonic Band will be required to perform a solo and participate in an ensemble in the LISD Solo and Ensemble Contest in February. Students may perform a second solo in May at the LISD 2nd Solo and Ensemble Contest. Students are required to participate in UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest, as well as all other required performances listed on the band calendar.

Grading Policy: Symphonic Band

Nine Weeks averages are based on the following:

- **Homework (25%)**
 - Music Theory Lessons – These will be part of the daily warm up. Students should complete them in their theory book or issued worksheet. Assignments will be checked weekly. Assignments not completed in class should be completed for homework before the next class.
 - Practice Records - Students who practice daily, in the correct manner, will make the most progress on their instruments. The grading policy states that acceptable practice to improve is 5 days per week for a 20 minute session. This is considered to be the minimum practice. A few minutes each day is better than a long period of time only once or twice weekly. During practice session, students should practice the materials from class, in the manner explained by directors and lesson teachers.
 - Binder Checks – Band binders will be checked periodically and at the end of the nine weeks for organization of all required materials.
- **Participation (Including weekly sectionals) (35%)**
 - Weekly Participation Grade – Students are expected to be on time to class with all necessary materials and fully participate in the warm-up/daily drill activity. Students who meet these expectations will receive a 100 for the week. A student who is late, does not have all needed materials or does not participate will receive 10 points off of their weekly grade for each day they do not meet these expectations.
 - Sectionals– Students must be present, on time and actively participate in their assigned sectional in order to receive full credit. Students will have playing assignment due each week.
- **Major Grades (Tests/Performances) (40%):**
 - Written and playing exams are given throughout the nine weeks.
 - Concert Performances – **All Concert Performances are required. Concert Performances are considered playing exams and will count twice.** Students are expected to arrive on time, in proper uniform and fully participate in order to receive full credit.

Grading Policy:

Beginning Band (Other than Percussion):

Nine Weeks averages are based on the following:

- **Participation (35%)**
 - Students will be graded on individual effort and progress through playing and written exercises and class discussion. Students are expected to be on time to class with all necessary materials and fully participate in the warm-up and daily drill activity. Students who meet these expectations will receive a 100 for the week. A student who is late, does not have all needed materials or does not participate will receive 20 points off of their weekly grade for each day they do not meet these expectations.

- **Minor (25%)**
 - Practice Records - Students who practice daily, and in the correct manner, will make the most progress on their instruments. The grading policy states that acceptable practice to improve is 5 days per week for a 20 minute session. Students will build up to this requirement. They will begin with less required time as specified on their practice charts. A few minutes each day is better than a long period of time only once or twice a week. During practice sessions, students are expected to practice the materials from class, in the manner explained by directors and lesson teachers. **Students may also be graded on playing assignments uploaded to Canvas.**
 - Binder Checks – Band binders will be checked weekly, and at the end of the nine weeks for organization of all required materials.
- **Major Grades (Tests/Performances) (40%):**
 - Written and playing exams are given throughout the nine weeks.
 - Concert Performances – **All Concert Performances are required. Concert Performances are considered playing exams and will count twice.** Students are expected to show up on time, in proper uniform and fully participate in order to receive full credit.

Grading Policy:

Beginning Percussion:

Mr. Wylie, our Percussion Instructor, will communicate grading requirements for his class. “Beginning Percussion” class is taught by Mr. Wylie on three campuses. The requirements are the same for all of his percussion students. Contact Mr. Wylie directly for questions regarding percussion.

General Behavioral Expectations:

Students are expected to adhere to the "Code of Conduct" as detailed in the LISD student handbook.

1. Students are expected to participate in band activities with a supportive and positive spirit.
2. Students are expected to treat themselves, each other, all instructors and guests with courtesy and respect. They are expected to respond appropriately to instruction with positive verbiage.
3. Each student is expected to be in class, in the rehearsal setting, or present for travel or performances on time and with the required equipment and materials.
4. Students are expected to take proper care of all band equipment, including band instruments, music, uniforms, and facilities.

Band Hall Rules:

The following rules are in place to protect you and your belongings. Respecting and following the rules listed below will allow you to have a more enjoyable experience in the Downing Middle School Band.

1. No gum, food, candy or drinks (water is allowed)
2. No running or horseplay
3. Only current members are allowed in the band hall
4. Restrooms should be used before and after class
5. Instruments should be kept in assigned slots and clearly labeled with your name
6. Do not play on anyone else’s instrument
7. Only percussionists are allowed to touch/play the percussion instruments.
8. Knock and wait for permission to enter the Directors’ office. Never enter the Directors’ office if an adult is not in the office.
9. Use common sense and maintain a positive attitude ALWAYS!!

Classroom Procedures and Expectations:

When class meets, students are expected to:

- Enter the Band Hall quietly and get needed materials and equipment for class
- Be in your seat with all materials within 1 minute of the tardy bell, working on warm-up
 - The DMS Tardy Policy will apply to students who are Tardy.
 - Tardy student should sign the Tardy Log
 - 4th Tardy will result in Office referral
- Leave all “non-band” materials in specified area along wall

- Place small cases underneath chairs; Leave Large cases in slots
- Wait to play instrument until instructed to do so
- Be mentally engaged during class
- Show respect by not talking during class
- Raise hand and wait to be called on before speaking

Morning and Afternoon Procedures and Expectations:

- Enter the band hall and put away or get out your instrument and materials
- Go to sectionals or to a practice room
- Exit the Band Hall and report to the appropriate location (cafeteria is the holding area in the morning)
- Do not hang out in the hallway outside of the Fine Arts wing. There is no supervision in that area
- During Sectionals, students who are not involved in sectionals are welcome to sit in the band hall to study or do homework in a quiet manner.
- If there are no sectionals, students may sit in the band hall to study, do homework or visit.

Discipline:

- The Downing Middle School Discipline Plan will be followed in band.

Materials and Equipment

Students will need to have the following materials and supplies in class daily:

- Instrument in working condition with all accessories
- Band Binder with all music (this includes Beginning Band Method book for Beginning Band students)
- A no. 2 pencil with an eraser

Woodwinds:

Flutes: - Tuning Rod; Silk Cleaning Swab, flute stand

Double Reeds - 3 Working Reeds, Silk Cleaning Swab, Water Container

Clarinets/Saxophones - 3 Working Reeds, Silk Cleaning Swab, Cork Grease, Mouthpiece Cap and Neck Strap, clarinet stand

Brass:

Trumpets and Euphoniums - Piston Valve Oil, Slide Grease

French Horns and Tubas: - Rotor Oil, or Piston Valve Oil (Some tubas), Slide Grease

Trombones - Trombotine, Slide Lubricant, Spray Bottle, Slide Grease

Percussion:

Refer to handout provided by Mr. Wylie

LISD Owned Instruments

Lewisville ISD charges a rental fee of \$100 for school owned instruments. This fee will be collected in September. If you would prefer, you may divide this fee into two payments of \$50 with the first being due in September and the second being due in January. The fee is intended to help offset the normal repair and maintenance on all school owned instruments. This fee does not cover damage done to the instrument by the student. Please contact a director if you feel your instrument is in need of repair. The fee for 7th and 8th Percussionists is \$100 for the year.

Personally Owned Equipment

A quality band program requires quality materials and instruments. Students are required to purchase all necessary materials for their instruments to ensure quality playing condition (i.e. correct mouthpieces, working reeds, cleaning swab, valve oil, drum sticks, mallets, etc.). Please refer to our Preferred Instrument and Supplies List when purchasing or renting an instrument.

Individuals who purchase their own instruments should insure the instrument. Check with your insurance company about adding it to your homeowner's policy or take out an individual insurance policy. We recommend entering your instrument's serial number into CHARMS.

Practice Rooms

There are two practice rooms for Band students. They are available on a first come-first serve basis before and after school. No more than four students will be allowed in one practice room. Students are expected to "Practice" while they are in the Practice Room. Private lessons also take place in the Practice Rooms. Teachers pay a fee to the district to use the facilities to conduct lessons. Lesson teachers may ask students to vacate the Practice Room so that they can have a place to teach.

Academic Eligibility

"No pass, no play" is a Texas state law. This means that any grade below a 70 in any class on a student's report card results in their ineligibility to participate in any extra-curricular activities for a three to six week period. This includes all competitions and festivals, district and region competitions. This situation has obvious adverse effects on both the individual and the group. Parents and students should understand that a student's grades have a direct impact on every member of the band. This does not apply to UIL Concert and Sightreading as it is an evaluation of a co-curricular class.

Uniforms

ALL BAND MEMBERS: Downing Band T-shirt

The Downing Band t-shirt is part of the required uniform for Beginning Band and the "informal" uniform for Advanced Bands. The cost of the t-shirt is included in Band Fees.

Beginning Band Uniform

All band students will be required to wear a band uniform for various performances throughout the year. Beginning students' uniforms will consist of their band shirt (always tucked in), jeans and athletic shoes.

Advanced Band Uniform

In addition to the Band T-shirt (worn with jeans and athletic shoes and always tucked in), students in the Symphonic Band will be required to rent or purchase a formal uniform and the necessary accessories. Second year Symphonic Band students may wear their uniform from the previous year. Specific information can be found on the Symphonic Band Official Fee Sheet.

CHARMS

Charms Music Office Assistant is the Downing Band's online database. This will be one of our main sources of communication. Parents should update any contact information as it changes. Parents may also check monetary information for accuracy. Any "partial" payments will be moved to the "miscellaneous" category until fee is paid in full. More information may be found on the Band website.

Band Fees

Various events and equipment throughout the year will require fees. A detailed description of these fees is listed on the Band Fees Sheet and covered in our parent meeting. If participation in any of these events is in jeopardy due to adverse family financial situations, please let a director know. We do not want students to avoid participation for financial reasons. Supporting students in need when these situations arise is one of the functions of the Downing Band Booster Club.

Downing Middle School Band Website

We will be utilizing the Band website during the school year. The address is www.downingmsband.com. General information will be found on the home page. The Band Calendar and downloadable handouts will be available, as well as pictures and links to help students learn. **The password is 2324member**

Fundraising

A quality band program requires funding to function. While we do receive quality instruments, support and some funds from the school district, it does not come close to meeting the needs of the quality band program desired for our students, school, district and state. The Downing Band Boosters provides opportunities for students and families to help raise funds to support the students in the Downing Band.

Private Lessons

Downing MS is extremely fortunate to have an outstanding staff of private lesson teachers. This program is designed to enrich and further the level of performance of the student. One on one individual instruction is the main reason band programs are extremely successful in Texas. Even though private study is not a requirement for participation in band, it should be noted that most band students take advantage of this excellent opportunity. It is a misconception that private lessons are for students that have "fallen behind" on their instrument. While private lessons will benefit those students, they are designed and intended also for students to advance at a more rapid pace.

The opportunity to study with these professional musicians is invaluable and has proven to be one of the most successful ingredients to individual achievement.

More detailed information regarding private lessons was sent home with the students and is available on the Band Website. To enroll your child in private lessons, simply return the "enrollment Forms" attached to the private lesson handout. While students may enroll in private lessons at any time during the year, private lesson teacher schedule and availability usually fills up within the first few weeks. It is recommended that students desiring to be in private lessons do so from the beginning of the year. If you have further questions regarding private lessons, please contact Mrs. Clardy at clardym@lisd.net.

Calendar

The calendar is included in the parent registration packet. It is also available on the Downing Band Website. Please be aware of your student's commitments as you fill in your family calendar. Work schedules, family trips, camps, appointments, and other activities must not interfere with long standing mandatory dates. The band is dependent on ALL of its members. Unlike most other classes where individuals are accountable only for their own success or failure, band student's success is in large part dependent on the full participation of all the members. Please discuss any possible conflicts with Mrs. Clardy. Some conflicts can be resolved, given enough notice.

Additional Information for Future Reference:

Braces

While braces are a necessity for some students, and generally do not pose a big issue with playing an instrument, it is recommended that students getting "new" braces or hardware allow 2-3 weeks "adjustment time" before a performance.

Step-Up Instruments:

Near the end of the Beginning Band year, (January for trombones) students playing some instruments may benefit from trading their beginning instrument for a "step-up" instrument. More information will be given closer to the end of the year. The following instruments may be affected: Flute, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone.

LISD Summer Band Camp: (Recommended for students who have completed grades 6 -8). This is a one-week, half-day camp. Students will receive instruction on their instruments and prepare music for a concert at

the end of the week. The cost is around \$75 for the week. This is a great place to meet local band friends and continue to develop on your instrument.

Other Summer Opportunities: There are several Summer Band Camp opportunities. These will be published in the Spring.

Field Trips/Parties and Loss of Privilege

Field trips and parties are a privilege in the music classes at Downing. If a student has had multiple discipline infractions at Downing in any of their classes, they may lose some, or all, field trip and party privileges in their music classes. The final decision on whether or not a student will be allowed to attend a music field trip or party will be made by the director and an administrator.

Band Handbook Acceptance Form

I have read and understand all of the rules, regulations, procedures, and philosophy of the Downing Band. I also know how to access the calendar on the Downing Band website and understand that these dates are important for my attendance. By signing this sheet, I am agreeing to comply with the items set in this handbook.

Student Name:

_____/_____
Student Signature: Date

Parent/Guardian Name:

_____/_____
Parent/Guardian Signature: Date

This form is due on Friday, August 25, 2023

**The handbook can be found on the Downing Band website under the Parent tab.

www.downingmsband.com

Password: 2324member

