

All Saints Catholic School

**Band Handbook
2016-2017**



All Saints Band

Dear Parents,

This is all of the information you need to join the All Saints Band Program. If you have any questions though please let me know!

Your student has met with the Band Director, Mrs. Afdahl, and has tried all of the band instruments that they were interested in. By watching each student Mrs. Afdahl has recommended the instrument that she believes will give your student the best chance of success in band. If your student wishes to play a different instrument please contact Mrs. Afdahl.

In the packet of information is a **purple sheet** that has a check list with due dates, fees and all the other information needed to sign up for band.

Groth Music is a music company that will rent out instruments to you. With a one time initial payment an instrument can be rented on a four month trial period. This trial period allows all band students to try the instrument and see if it is something that they are interested in. The instrument can be returned to Groth Music anytime during the four months and no additional payments are required. After the four months a monthly fee is required (interest free) until the instrument is paid in full. There is a credit check on all instrumental rentals.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Mrs. Afdahl either by e-mail or by phone. I look forward to meeting you and sharing my love for music with you! Thank you!!

Sincerely,

Joy Afdahl

Director of Bands All Saints Catholic School

jafdahl@allsaintschurch.com, 651-283-8291

Objectives

- **To build leadership and character.** The All Saints Band Program strives to be known by its outstanding character and citizenship. We will work to ensure that proper conduct, consideration and respect is a vital part of participating in band - both in our band rehearsals and in our public performances. All Band members will treat each other respectfully as team members upholding the culture of acceptance and tolerance.
- **To develop the technical skills necessary to play a musical instrument,** both as a soloist and as a member of an ensemble, and to develop the skills necessary to create music with emotional, artistic, and personal expression.
- **To promote the success of the entire All Saints Band Program** as well as the individual student, and encourage a lifelong appreciation of music through performance.
- **To increase the amount of fun and satisfaction each student receives from participating in band.** What you get out of band depends on how much you put into it. Each student is expected to strive to put in enthusiasm and hard work, as well as a desire to “do the job right” into all band activities. Personal responsibility to be responsible for their part in the ensemble, from remembering lesson times to practicing diligently for band rehearsals and lessons.
- **To promote and encourage all band students to work together as a “musical team” toward specific goals and objectives.** Students will experience leadership roles, as well as how to be good followers. Every member is vital to the program. If one band member is missing the entire group is diminished. Only together can we create beautiful music.

Overview

Students who want to join band are those students who are **committed** and **dedicated** to learning how to create music. While learning an instrument can be fun, it also takes time and patience. Band students must be able to handle their classroom subjects as well as the demands of mastering an instrument. Students are personally responsible for being prepared for all lessons and rehearsals.

Three different traditional bands and a jazz band are offered at All Saints Catholic School:

Beginning Band: Students who are new to playing a band instrument. Previous music experience is not necessary.
Beginning Band meets: Mondays and Thursdays during school from 11:30-12:00 p.m.

Concert Band: Students who are second year band students. This group promotes musical growth in preparation for Wind Ensemble.
Concert Band meets: Wednesdays and Fridays during school from 11:30-12:00 p.m.

Wind Ensemble: Students who have played a band instrument for two years or more.
Wind Ensemble meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays before school from 7:30 a.m. to 8:05 a.m.
(Please arrive at 7:20 a.m. to be ready to play right at 7:30 a.m.)

A “Big Band” Jazz Band is also offered to students enrolled in the band program. Students can audition for this group in the fall. **This ensemble is separate from beginning band, concert band, and wind ensemble and requires separate activity fee to participate.**

Jazz Band: Students who are interested in learning various styles of jazz music and want to experiment with different musical concepts not found in traditional band. This is an audition based ensemble; interested students will audition in the fall. **Jazz Band meets: Monday and Wednesday mornings before school from 7:30 a.m. to 8:05 a.m.** (Please arrive at 7:20 a.m. to be ready to play right at 7:30 a.m.)

Expectations

Student Responsibilities

- Students will treat their fellow band members, instruments and music with respect.
- Students will bring appropriate materials (including a pencil) to all lessons and band rehearsals
- Students will prepare their lesson material to the best of their ability.
- Students will be responsible for knowing the time of their weekly lesson. If you're not sure, ASK!
- Students will **be expected** to practice 100 minutes a week to prepare for their lessons each week.
- Students will notify the band director ahead of time if they are missing any music or if they have a conflict with any lesson or rehearsal.
- All instrument cases should have a name tag on them that is easily identifiable.
- Students will see their teachers about missed work during lesson times. **Band is not an excuse for any late or missing work!**
- Students will not use the early morning band rehearsal to make-up other work, tests or study.

Parent Responsibilities

- Help students find a suitable time to practice each day in order to establish a routine.
- Ensure that students arrive on time for their morning band rehearsals. Please arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Talk to your student about music and share your own musical interests
- Ask the student to play for you to further monitor their progress.
- Remind student of their responsibilities.

Academics

- Students enrolled in band are required to achieve and sustain a high level of academic success in all academic areas. Students that do not continue a high level of academic achievement may be suspended from the band program until their grades improve.

Lessons

- **Students are required to attend their weekly lessons.**
- If a student feels well enough to come to school they need to be at their lessons.
- Missed lessons because of forgotten lesson times will result in zero points.
- The student's instrument will be in good working condition allowing them to fully participate in the lesson or band rehearsal.
- Students will have their music prepared and with them for each small group lesson to receive full credit (instrument, lesson book, band music, pencil).
- A weekly **Lesson Schedule** will be posted outside the band room and they the 4th Grade hallway. It is the student's responsibility to know when their lesson is and to be prepared.

Band Rehearsals

- **Students are required to attend all band rehearsals on time, ready to play.**
- If a student feels well enough to come to school they need to be at rehearsal.
- Students will bring their instrument and all the appropriate music to the band rehearsal.
- Student behavior will be such that it makes a positive contribution to the ensemble.

Band Director Responsibilities

- The Director will be available for students, parents and staff either by e-mail or by appointment during the week. All concerns will be addressed in a timely fashion.
- The Director will do everything possible to ensure that band is an environment which leads to success. Students will be held to the highest standard and will be encouraged to achieve in and outside of the classroom.
- The Director will treat all students with the same respect that is expected from the students.
- The Director will do her best to make band an enjoyable experience for all students/parents and staff.
- The Director will provide a quarterly grade that will be on each student's report card.

Concerts and Performances

The band will perform three concerts this year:

- Christmas Band Concert: **Thursday, December 15th, 2016, 7:00 p.m.**
- Winter Band Concert: **Thursday, March 9, 2017, 7:00 p.m.**
- Spring Band Concert: **Thursday, May 18, 2017, 7:00 p.m.**

All band students are required to perform at these concerts!

If extenuating circumstances exist the band director must be informed ahead of time.

Cost of the Program

A \$200 activity fee will cover all band music and other miscellaneous band materials.

All band students **must** have a music stand for use at home. Wire music stands typically cost about **\$12.00-\$15.00**. Students should also purchase a lesson book, any essential reeds, cleaning swabs or oils that accompany the instrument. Some supplies and reeds will be available at school for purchase in emergency situations!

Beginning Clarinets and Saxophones: Please use **2 ½** reeds
(2 ½ is the reed thickness: please have on hand at least **4 good reeds at all times**)

Music Stores

The following music stores are **reputable and licensed dealers of band instruments**. They have knowledgeable and helpful staff to assist you, and have access to instrument repair facilities. I recommend using these stores for your music needs. If you need further assistance with a purchase, or have questions about mail order, online music stores, or ebay purchases, please contact your band director.

The store marked with the asterisk (*) has a music representative who visits our school each week.

Groth Music*
8056 Nicollet Ave. S
Bloomington, MN 55420
(952)884-4772

Schmitt Music Burnsville
14150 Nicollet Ave. South
Burnsville, MN 55337-5726
(952)435-2454

Band Grades

The following information is an explanation of how your child's musical progress is assessed. Each trimester, all band students will receive a grade in band. These grades DO NOT affect the student's academic standing (GPA) But low scores in band will count in determining if a student is eligible for academic honors and/or honor roll. The band grade is derived from three equally weighted categories listed below.

1. The Band Rehearsal

The band rehearsal grade is based on student attendance and their participation in full band rehearsal. Each band rehearsal is worth five (5) points. Student attendance is critical to the overall growth and success of the band experience. Unexcused absences from rehearsal will result in a zero for the rehearsal grade. Illness, appointments, vacations, and family emergencies are acceptable reasons for missing a rehearsal, and will be handled on an individual basis (the student will receive an excused for that rehearsal grade). However, if a student is well enough to come to school, they will be expected to be in band and attend their lesson.

If a student instrument is in the repair shop, please notify the band director. Depending on your rental agreement, it may be possible to obtain an instrument on "loan" if the repair will take a long Time.

2. The Weekly Band Lesson

Each week a student is assigned a time for a **group lesson** of like instruments. The lesson schedule is on a rotating basis that floats throughout the periods of the school day. This was developed to avoid the continual "pull-out" from the same class. Lesson schedules are posted outside of the band room and by the 4th grade classrooms. **The student will be held responsible for knowing when their lesson is scheduled.**

At each lesson a student can earn up to five (5) points. Unexcused absences will be given zero (0) points. At the end of the quarter the number of points will be totaled, resulting in a letter grade for that activity.

If the student has a test, field trip or special event, the student should notify the band director in advance in order to be excused from that lesson.

3. Student Practice

Students are encouraged to practice 100 minutes a week outside of school time. They can break this up however they need to. It's best to practice 15 at least every day but this is not always possible so there may be days and even weeks where practice is very sporadic. There will be a practice chart for each trimester where the students record their practice time. At mid-trimester they need to bring the practice card in with a parent signature and again at the end of the trimester with a parent signature. I will total their practice minutes and if they average 100 minute per week they will receive an A for this portion of their grade.

Facts About Band

Q: What is the easiest instrument to play?

A: The one that you WANT to play! It all depends on the student and how much time you put into learning the instrument. What is easy for some students may not be easy for others.

Q: Do I have to play piano to take percussion with the band?

A: **Yes. At least two years of piano study is best.** Students must also demonstrate their piano skills before being assigned to the percussion section.

Q: I play guitar. Can I be in the band?

A: Guitars are commonly used in jazz bands. Our concert bands do not have parts for guitars. You may want to check with our parish music director to see if there are additional opportunities there.

Q: How much do I have to practice?

A: If you are a new beginner, we recommend 15-20 minutes at a time until your muscles strengthen. Otherwise, 30 minutes a day 4 days a week is recommended for everybody.

Q: Should I practice at the same time every day?

A: Yes, if possible. Try to establish a routine.

Q: What if I miss a day of practice?

A: Try to add additional time to your future practice times.

Q: I know all of my music; do I still have to practice?

A: Yes. To maintain good embouchure (mouth) strength and finger coordination, you should still practice something each day. You may work ahead in your lesson books if you like, or take a trip to the music store and buy books with play-along CDs. If you still need more materials, ask your band director.

Q: I'm in 5th-8th grade and want to join band. Is it too late?

A: No. Anyone can join band. When beginning on an instrument you will be placed in lessons with other beginning students and will participate in the beginning ensemble to encourage growth and fundamental musicianship.

Q: Do you recommend private lessons?

A: Yes, but make sure the lesson teacher actually plays your instrument. Study with a professional for best results.

Q: I have a sore throat and can't play my instrument OR my braces hurt. Should I still come to my lessons and band rehearsal?

A: Yes. You can finger along or tap/clap with us. Valuable ensemble information is covered in band rehearsals and lessons that you should be a part of. For pain with braces please talk to your band director about techniques and devices that make playing with braces less painful.

Q: My instrument isn't working right. Should I try to fix it myself?

A: NO!! Ask your band director to look at it first. Sometimes students/parents who try to fix instruments themselves actually end up doing more damage - especially to woodwind instruments. Bringing the instrument in for repair by a certified technician is best.

Q: How often do instruments need to go into repair?

A: All instruments should be checked/cleaned once a year by a professional. Woodwind instruments need to be checked for pad alignment and pads leaking air.