



South Belton Band Handbook

2021-2022

sbmsband.net

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Welcome to the South Belton Middle School Band Program! It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that we introduce our band program to you in a more detailed manner. The SBMS band program has established a wonderful tradition of excellence and we are glad you have chosen to be a part of it. Your child's participation in our band program is beneficial in many ways.

Band students are engaged daily in a highly creative performing art that stimulates growth in areas of the human brain that no other discipline can. This growth effortlessly transfers into your student's academic life. In addition, our band students will develop traits such as teamwork, responsibility, dedication, self-discipline, social skills, confidence, leadership and dependability. Membership in our band program will give all a sense of accomplishment, pride, and respect as the students develop musical and personal skills that will enrich their lives.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the guidelines and expectations for making this year a success for all involved, and to serve as a guide and resource for students and parents. Both students and their parents should take the time to thoroughly read this handbook. Upon completion, the contract on the last page should be signed and returned to school, indicating your understanding of these guidelines and expectations.

****Enrolling in band is a full year course, and students who enroll are expected to commit for the full academic school year.****

Band Calendar

Changes in the calendar do happen as this is a living document. We will notify you of changes as soon as we become aware of them, and the most up-to-date calendar can always be found on the following websites: sbmsband.net/calendar or tinyurl.com/sbmsbandevents. Most performances and events will require academic eligibility to participate.

South Belton Band Expectations

Every member of the South Belton Band is expected to display exemplary behavior at all times. As a band member, students constantly represent South Belton Middle School, Belton Independent School District, and the City of Belton. Consequently, members should be certain that their actions, language, and attitude displayed are of a professional character. With this in mind, the SBMS Band has established expectations to help guide our actions and dictate daily procedure:

1. **Be Prepared** – requires that students have all necessary materials for each and every rehearsal and performance. Necessary materials include: a binder with all music, pencils, a working instrument, reeds, oils, etc. In addition, “Be Prepared” also requires students to have assigned material learned before each and every rehearsal and performance. This can only be attained through daily practice.
2. **Be Disciplined** – requires students to observe all rules set forth in the BISD Student Code of Conduct upon entering the Band Hall. In addition, “Be Disciplined” refers to the personal discipline required to master a musical instrument. Again, this can only be attained through daily practice.
3. **Be Engaged** – refers specifically to the mental toughness, concentration, and focus necessary to accomplish the goals set forth each day of performing music at a high level of precision and artistry. It is expected that every student of the South Belton Band program be mentally tough and not ever give up on themselves or other members so that each student reaches their individual potential.
4. **Demonstrate Esprit de Corps** - “a feeling of pride, fellowship, and common loyalty shared by the members of a particular group.” Each member of the South Belton Band is valued. Their success is your success. Work to build relationships and encourage your peers to be their very best alongside you.

Attributes That Do Not Require Talent

The following are highly desirable attributes that require ZERO “talent”. These attributes set students apart from their peers and make them quite successful not only in band and school, but also in life.

Arriving Early - Students who arrive early to class, a performance, or an event are generally more prepared than those who do not. They experience less stress and have a more relaxed and confident approach to doing what is required of them.

Being Prepared - Students who have everything ready to go are more prosperous than those who do not. They progress more quickly because they don’t lose any information during instruction.

Positive Attitude - Students are much more productive in dealing with other people (such as teachers, adults, and other students) when they think the best of everything and are willing to interact in a positive manner.

High Work Ethic - Hard work surpasses talent every single time. Teachers and adults are far more willing to go the extra mile for students who work hard consistently in everything they do.

Full Energy - This attribute is highly contagious and contributes significantly to the learning environment.

100% Effort - Some students may not be as talented as others, but those willing to give 100% effort always learn more and are more enjoyable to teach. Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.

Respectful Body Language - Students always show what they are thinking or feeling in their body language, which speaks louder than any words can. Make sure body language is always sending the right message.

Being Moldable/Teachable/Coachable - Students will learn more if they are willing to try new things, especially if they have never attempted certain tasks before. Be a follower first so you can learn to be a leader second.

Enthusiasm & Passion - Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. Find what drives your passion and do it to the best of your ability.

Going Beyond the Extra Mile - The deeper the sacrifice, the more the gain. Students who do more than what is asked of them will always rank among the best. How badly you want something dictates how hard you'll work at it.

Ensemble Descriptions

Beginner's Ensemble

This ensemble consists of first-year instrumental players, and is made up of mainly 6th graders. This is the **most important year** for Band members because the student will learn 90% of the fundamentals necessary to be successful in playing an instrument. The ensemble is split during the school day into like-instrument classes, and comes together for dress rehearsals and concert performances during the school year.

These members will participate in dress rehearsals, concerts, contests, and may become eligible for the Spring Trip. End-of-Year Auditions will be held in May for placement in either the Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble for the following year. The audition material will be announced in time to adequately prepare for the audition. Students who do not pass their audition will be retained in the Beginner's Ensemble the following year.

Beginner's Ensemble students should always keep in mind that this is a preparatory course designed to prepare them for participation in Band for the next 6 years.

Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble

These performing ensembles consist of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments, and perform music from various repertoires. Band students in the 6th & 7th grades will audition for Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble in May for the upcoming school year. Eighth grade students will audition for the Belton High School Marching Hundred (M100) in the spring semester.

Jazz Band

This ensemble meets everyday during the school day, and includes 7th & 8th grade students who play only the following instruments: saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass, vibraphone, auxiliary percussion, and drum set. Jazz history, appreciation, and listening will be studied, as well as performance practices, including improvisation.

Students are required to use one of their elective choices for Jazz Band, and be concurrently enrolled in either Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble. The only exception to this rule are instruments in the rhythm section (piano, guitar, bass, & drum set) who may join only after passing an audition.

Parents, you and the directors have the important responsibility to encourage and support your child. He/She can achieve what can be dreamed, and our mutual desire is to help your child enjoy the good times and learn from the tough times.

Performance Attendance

It is not possible to make-up a performance. Attendance at all performances is **mandatory**. The directors must approve all absences in advance, and only conflicts of a serious or emergency nature will be considered. Performances are the centerpiece and focus of our program and when missed, the students do not get to experience the fruits of their labor.

*If your child has to miss due to illness or other reason, email a director PRIOR to the missed event. It is imperative that students learn personal accountability. It is expected that students will never just “not show up.”

If you absolutely must miss an activity due to an avoidable conflict or family emergency, a written request, phone call, or email by parent or guardian will be needed **at least 24 hours before** the performance. Requests will be reviewed and excused at the directors' discretion. **Students who repeatedly miss performances (excused or unexcused) will be subject to removal from the band program.**

Every member of our Band is important. One missing member is like a missing link in a chain. **You** are important!

Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills for Fine Arts (TEKS)

- C. Knowledge & Skills: Creative expression. The student demonstrates musical artistry by singing or playing an instrument, alone and in groups, performing a variety of unison, homophonic, and polyphonic repertoire. The student makes music at an appropriate level of difficulty and performs in a variety of genres from notation and by memory:
- (C) perform independently and expressively, with accurate intonation and rhythm, developing fundamental skills and appropriate solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble performance techniques;
 - (D) perform independently and expressively a varied repertoire of music representing various styles and cultures;
 - (E) sight-read independently and expressively, with accurate intonation and rhythm, demonstrating fundamental skills and appropriate solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble performance techniques in known keys and rhythms

The success of our program is directly proportional to the overall attendance rate throughout the year. **Please make every effort to schedule your medical, dental, or other appointments around band activities and class time.**

A note about dental appointments and braces: Please check the Band Calendar (sbmsband.net/calendar) for all events before scheduling these kinds of appointments. Students work very hard in preparation for these events and sometimes they cannot participate after dental/braces work has been done.

Rehearsal Participation

Students receive daily grades for participating in rehearsals. If a student is ill and has been advised by a medical professional to not play their instrument during class, they are required to bring a doctor or parent note in order to be excused. Students will be excused for no more than 2 days, and are **always** required to assemble their instrument and finger-along during class. Every student is required to participate in rehearsal every day to the best of their ability.

If a student must stay home from school because of an illness, they are automatically excused from practicing for that particular day. Students should write "Sick" on that day's practice record/log, and have a parent/guardian initial it. In order to avoid reinfection, students should sanitize their mouthpiece, ligature, and reeds with rubbing alcohol.

Band Events Defined

All-Region Band Auditions for 7th & 8th Graders (required for Wind Ensemble members):

Students from nearby school districts participate in these auditions. The audition consists of 5 memorized major scales, a memorized chromatic scale, and 2 prepared etudes (not memorized). Students are judged by a panel of 3-5 judges who sit behind a partition to listen to each student perform their music. This process protects student anonymity and the integrity of the audition process.

Top students are selected from these auditions and receive the honor of participating in the All-Region Band Clinic & Concert. Selection to the All-Region Band is **the highest honor** a middle school band member can achieve, and the rehearsals and performances are led by a notable music educator. Our philosophy emphasizes the improvement each student experiences as a result of participating in the All-Region Band audition process.

Before or After School Rehearsal/Sectional: A special rehearsal held outside of normal school hours.

Concert: A concert is a non-competitive performance, and there is no admission charge. Family members and friends are strongly encouraged to attend. Concerts are a major part of our curriculum that is graded and attendance is **required** of all students in the participating groups. All students are eligible to participate in concerts as academically eligibility is not required for these performances.

Contest or Festival: A contest or festival is a competitive performance. Students must be academically eligible* to participate.

Solo & Ensemble Contest: All SBMS Band students who are academically eligible* will be required to participate in Solo & Ensemble Contest. The performers are judged according to a standard.

*Academic Eligibility

As mandated by the Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL), a grade below 70 on a 6-week report card will deny a student competitive performance privileges for a 3- to 6-week period. Because of the adverse effect this problem can have on an individual and the group as a whole, the directors monitor all student grades around contest times.

Parents, we ask that you continue to supervise your child and communicate with their teachers if any grade questions should arise. Students should understand that their grades have a direct influence on other students as well as themselves. Every individual in the South Belton Band plays a vital role as a link in our chain.

Outline of UIL Academic Requirements (No Pass, No Play):

- If a student receives a grade below 70 in any subject, that student will become ineligible for extracurricular activities starting on the Friday following the end of the grading period in which the failing grade was received.
- A student can regain eligibility on the Friday following the 3-week grading period if the student is passing EVERY class and receives no remark of "currently failing" on their 3-week progress report.

Grading

Daily Grades: 60% includes, but are not limited to: weekly/daily playing assignments, written work, weekly practice records, class materials, and before & after school sectionals (as needed for performances).

Practice Records constitute a large portion of a student's band grade because they are submitted weekly for the whole school year. This keeps students accountable for practicing their instrument outside of class.

Major Grades: 40% includes, but is not limited to: performances, written tests, & playing tests. The in-class Playing Rubric can be found on the Handouts page of the SBMS Band website at sbmsband.net/handouts. This rubric is used for all playing assignments/tests, chair tests, playoffs, and auditions.

Helpful Tips for Success

1. PRACTICE

Following a consistent, daily practice schedule is essential for a student to progress at an acceptable rate on his or her instrument. Parents, encourage your child to adopt a schedule of 25 minutes per day, at least 5 days per week. Total practice time each week should be at least 120 minutes (2 hours). Students know that we expect them to practice outside of class time. Practicing is just as important as any assignment that must be turned in. You are the only ones that can carve out this time for your child. This is hard, but it matters just as much as any other academic support you can provide. Please know that in-class rehearsals is not enough and cannot be the only time students are playing their instrument. Our goal is to support you in creating strong practice habits in your child, every day. We ask that you support your child by setting aside practice time at home.

- 1. Have goals when you practice; 2. Eliminate distractions; 3. Set up a daily schedule and stick to it; 4. **Always** use a metronome & music stand.

2. PRIVATE LESSONS

In addition to band classes, we have a fine roster of talented private teachers available from Univ. of Mary Hardin-Baylor (UMHB), Baylor University, and Temple College. Private lessons are required for oboe and bassoon players and students in the Wind Ensemble. Lessons are strongly recommended for ALL students in the SBMS Band. Students that take this opportunity progress at a faster rate with an increased development of talent and have a deeper appreciation for musical achievement.

Scholarships are available for help with the cost of lessons. Request forms are available online and in the Band Hall.

3. ALWAYS BE PREPARED FOR CLASS

- Instrument, mouthpiece, ligature, & all necessary reeds; One-inch 3-ring binder with student's name on the outside; Five notebook dividers & two highlighters; One dozen (12) sharpened pencils that go into... a pencil bag or holder that goes into 3-ring binder

4. DENTAL APPOINTMENTS AND BRACES

Check the Band Calendar (sbmsband.net/calendar) for all events before scheduling these kinds of appointments. Students work very hard in preparation for these events and many times they cannot participate after dental/braces work has been done.

Class Materials & Instrument Repairs

All students will receive a list of items needed with their instrument. All students **MUST** have a one-inch 3-ring binder with their name on it for their book and music given out in class. If you think your personally-owned instrument is in need of repair, let a director look at your instrument **BEFORE** it goes to the shop - it may save you time and money. The directors have experience with minor instrument repairing. Bring a parent note if your personal instrument is in the shop being repaired. School-owned instruments that are in need of repair must be given to the band directors. Parents and students are not authorized to take school-owned instruments to a repair shop.

Band Hall & Practice Rooms

These are your rooms to use at times determined by the directors. Show respect and pride by keeping them neat and clean:

- No food, drinks, or gum allowed in the band hall or ensemble/practice rooms.
- Keep lockers clean and neat, and always keep your locker locked when not in the Band Hall.
- No writing on stands, chairs, walls, lockers, etc.
- Only current Band students are allowed in the Band Hall and facilities at any time.

Instrument Storage

Each student will have a lock and locker assigned for their instrument and band supplies. Lockers are for storage of instruments and music **only**. Please keep school books, coats, athletic wear, etc., in other appropriate locations. Students are required to memorize their lock combination, and keep their instrument secure by keeping their locker locked when they are not in the Band Hall.

Uniforms

Beginner's Ensemble, Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble

Beginner's Ensemble, Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble members have an official South Belton Band polo shirt. Purchasing the shirt will be done at Band Registration.

Students will supply their own:

- Solid black, plain-front pants.
- Solid black calf-length dress socks. NO ankle socks.
- Solid black closed-toed dress shoes.

*Please let the directors know if this poses a financial burden for your family so we may help.

Spring Trip

To be able to participate in the end-of-year Spring Trip, students must:

1. Be academically-eligible during the grading period of the trip. This is an extracurricular trip, therefore students must have passed all classes with a 70 or above on their grade report.
2. Return a completed, signed permission slip.
3. Be present and perform at **all** major/formal performances. These performances are graded and participation is mandatory.
 - a. Major Performances include, but are not limited to: MS Band Night (8th Graders), All-Region Auditions, Beginner Sit-In Concert, Jazz Holiday Concert, Band Holiday Concert, All-Region Jazz Auditions, Pre- UIL Benchmark Concert, Solo & Ensemble Contest, Temple Jazz Festival, UIL Contest, Temple College Band Festival, and the spring Band-O-Rama Concert.
 - b. If a music student loses trip privileges for any SBMS organization on campus, he or she also loses trip privileges for the SBMS Band/Choir/Orchestra Spring Trip.

4. Have settled all financial obligations to the fine arts program **and** to the school before the trip. This includes yearly instrument usage fees, reed charges, library fines, iPad fees, student ID fees, and cafeteria fees.
5. Have met **all** behavior standards:
 - a. No Suspensions, LTISS, DAEP, or JJAEP for the entire school year.
 - b. No Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS) in the current spring semester.
 - c. Spring Semester Only: Less than three (3) days of ISS and Disciplinary Saturday School combined.
 - d. No more than six (6) After School Detentions in the current spring semester.
 - e. No more than nine (9) Lunch Detentions in the current spring semester.
 - f. No more than nine (9) Tardies in the current spring semester.
 - g. Directors, counselors, and/or principals will determine who is eligible to attend the Spring Trip. Any habitually disruptive student may be subject to exclusion.

Private Lesson Program

The Private Lesson Program makes it possible for students to receive additional individual instruction at a reasonable cost to parents. Lessons are charged at a rate of \$15-\$25 per 30-minute lesson, and fees are paid directly to the music enrichment instructors. Students enrolled in private lessons usually make All-Region Band, earn first division superior ratings on solos, sit at the top of their section, and eventually make the Texas All-State Band in high school, which usually results in full scholarships to college. Private lessons are vital to any quality band program, and are **strongly recommended** for all members.

Lessons are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis and available times vary according to each instructor's availability. There are slots offered during class time, and before or after school. The SBMS Band program is very fortunate to have several professional musicians from around the state willing to teach our students. Therefore, in order to participate in the program, we encourage students/parents to participate on a per semester basis. Your commitment helps to ensure that each instructor's workload offsets the cost of travel.

Twenty-four (24) hours advanced notice must be given directly to the instructor to be considered an excused absence. Make-ups for excused absences are to be arranged between the instructor and the student/parent, not the band directors. If timely notice is not given and a student misses a lesson, payment is still expected and a make-up session is to be scheduled at the discretion of the lesson instructor.

Being on time to lessons is necessary in order to preserve the instructor's lesson schedule. If a student is late to their lesson, they forfeit their scheduled lesson time to the next scheduled student, and the instructor will determine an alternate lesson time. Being on time to a lesson is defined as having all required materials in their possession and having completed their warm-up as assigned by their instructor **before** their scheduled lesson time. Please visit sbmsband.net/private-lessons to find contact information for the following private lesson instructors:

Jennie Miller (Flute) - Master of Music Education from New Mexico State University, and freelance flutist in Central Texas

Erin Gibson (Flute) - Master of Music in Flute Performance from Baylor University, and piccolo/flutist with the Temple Symphony Orchestra

Kaylenn Henderson (Clarinet & Saxophone) - Bachelor of Music Education from McMurray University, and has two children involved with the Belton Band program

Linda Fairlie (Bassoon) - Bachelor of Music Education from Kennesaw State University, and bassoonist with the Temple Symphony Orchestra & Cobb Symphony Orchestra

Jim Gibson (Trumpet) - Bachelor of Music Education from University of Texas at Austin, and Principal Trumpet of the Temple Symphony Orchestra & Central Texas Mastersingers

Jennifer Essary (Horn) - Bachelor of Music Education from University of Hardin-Simmons, hornist with the Temple Symphony Orchestra, and freelance hornist in Central Texas

Clayton Capps (Trombone, Euphonium, & Tuba) - Bachelor of Music in Low Brass Performance from University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, and freelance tubist in Central Texas

Scott Dudley (Percussion) - Bachelor of Music Education from Baylor University, and percussionist with the Temple Symphony Orchestra

Extracurricular Activity Restrictions & Code of Conduct

Before going on any activity with the Band, please read and understand the **Extracurricular Activity Restrictions and Code of Conduct** as reprinted from the Texas Education Code found in the SBMS Student Handbook.

School Band Enrollment

If a student quits or does not re-enroll in Band, they will not be allowed to enroll in middle school or high school band at a later date in Belton ISD.

Any band student who is placed in Long Term ISS, DAEP, and JJ, etc., is subject to removal from the Belton Band program at the discretion of the band directors and principals.

To be eligible for membership in the Belton High School Band, a student must have successfully completed Band the previous year, and played an audition for the high school band directors. If a student quits Band in middle school, they will **not** be allowed to enroll in high school Band at a later date.

Belton Band Boosters

The Belton Band Booster Club meets regularly at Belton High School. Information about this parent group is available from the directors. Middle school band parents are invited to be a part of this great organization.

Communication

The SBMS Band Website has the most up-to-date information: sbmsband.net

The directors encourage positive communication and are willing to discuss any aspect of a student's progress in Band with his/her parents:

Charms

Charms Office Assistant is a web-based program where band students and parents can view assigned inventory, finances, forms, and update their contact information. Here are instructions for accessing this program:

- Visit charmsoffice.com
- Locate and Hover over the “LOGIN” button in the upper-right corner. Select “Parents/Students/ Members”.
- Enter the school code **sbmsband** and select “Enter Charms”.
- On this Parent page, find the “Student Area Password” and enter their school ID number. Select “Enter”.
- You will then be instructed to change to a new password you will use for Charms. Select “Change Password”.
- On the next page you will be able to access student-specific services, such as finances, forms, and

inventory.

- Help us maintain our records by updating your contact information under “Update Info”, and please make sure all information is correct. This helps us send out emails, place phone calls, and occasionally mail out reminders. In fact, all contact from the SBMS Band comes from information entered into Charms.
- If you have questions about trip payments, select “Finances” for a full report on all payments made.

Updated Inventory and Forms can be checked as well.

- Select “Exit Charms” to logout.

Text Reminders

Like many other programs, the South Belton Band uses Remind to send out free text reminders for our various events. Each ensemble or group has their own code so parents can be assured that they will only receive information that applies directly to their child. If approved by the parent, students themselves can sign up for reminders to be received on their personal device. Subscriptions are reset every school year, so be sure to sign up every year during Band Registration. Here are the ensemble codes:

- To join Beginner’s Ensemble, text **@sbmsband21 to 81010**
- To join Symphonic Band, text **@sbmssym21 to 81010**
- To join Wind Ensemble, text **@sbmswind21 to 81010**
- To join Jazz Band, text **@sbmsjazz to 81010**

Handbook Signature Page

Please read and sign below as indicated:

Students-

I have read the 2021-2022 South Belton Middle School Band Handbook and understand the requirements for being a band member. I realize it takes full cooperation and dedication (100% from me) to help our band meet its potential. I also realize that my failure to follow policies and directions could result in disciplinary action, which could lead to placement in another band or dismissal from the band program. I have received a copy of the SBMS band calendar for the current school year and am aware that a copy also exists on the SBMS Band website.

As a member of the South Belton Middle School Band, I acknowledge the following as responsibilities I must fulfill if I wish to remain a member. I will:

- Demonstrate the SBMS Band Expectations
- Understand that band is a full year commitment
- Be punctual and prepared for weekly sectionals and rehearsals
- Practice with a purpose and turn in weekly practice sheets
- Demonstrate my best on playing assignments and written theory tests
- Attend all concerts, clinics, rehearsals and contests
- Treat my peers and teachers with respect, and maintain appropriate conduct
- Maintain my grades for eligibility and self-achievement
- Have a high standard for improvement in class and on my own

Student Signature

Printed Student Name

Date

Parents-

I have read the South Belton Middle School Band Handbook and am willing to support it and my child. I also understand all policies and procedures set forth by the South Belton Middle School Band program, as outlined in this handbook.

Parent Signature

Date

Phone number