

Dear Middle School Band Parents,

August 19, 2021

Welcome to a new school year! I hope that you and your family had an enjoyable and relaxing summer. I am SO excited to have the opportunity to teach your child in band this year and, as this is my first year teaching in the district, I will be looking forward to the opportunity to introduce myself personally to you! I encourage the use of our band website to check up-to-date information. Please visit: www.bvmsbands.com

The BVMS Band program is very special and maintains a high reputation; we will have several large group performances throughout the year, an in-house solo festival in the spring, and even an honor band event hosted at BV for select students from about 25 schools in the local area. The BVMS bands website has a Google calendar and a hard copy of our calendar later on here to print.

The school schedule lends support and success for all our band students. All 8th and 7th grade band students will rehearse each day at school, with orchestral students having a modified schedule. This year band students get a full lunch period as well! Additionally, each student will take part in a private lesson once per week. There will be no lessons the first week of school and you will not need your instrument the first day. These band lessons are required and are a great way for your child to improve in an individual and differentiated manner. I ask that you please encourage your child to remember their instrument on the days needed. Students are expected to practice at home and rehearse at school, meaning the expectation is for their instrument to go to and from school each day. If a lesson is missed, it **must** be made up within a week to receive full credit. Please encourage your child to play for you- it is a fun and rewarding experience when they have an audience and experience their progress!

Please read on for our “syllabus” - required supplies, important dates, attendance policy, and dress code information follows. Please note this should be signed by both the student and parent and turned back in the first week. This is going to be a great year at BVMS! Go Lynx!

Our main communication platform, besides email, is **Remind**. Remind is an accessible, quick text or app based service to get information out quickly. Parents and students are encouraged to join. Email is still the best way to reach me, as sometimes Remind messages do not reach my phone.

Band – Text “@bvmsband21” to the number 81010

Sincerely,



Mr. Devon Melillo

Middle School Band Syllabus

Course Description

This course will introduce students to a wide variety of band literature aimed at developing individual and group performance skills. Private pull-out lessons serve as individual instruction that compliment the ensemble experience. Emphasis is placed on posture, proper breathing, characteristic tone, rhythm, intonation, articulation, reading literacy skills, and other well-rounded musicianship qualities. Students have the opportunity to further enjoy music by involving themselves in the jazz ensembles, concert percussion ensemble, festivals, solo/ensemble contests, honor bands, and all-state events throughout the year. Participation in these events is highly encouraged!

Communication

Teacher: Devon Melillo

Email: devon.melillo@k12.sd.us

Website: www.bvmsbands.com

Remind: <https://www.remind.com/join/bvmsband21> OR text @bvmsbands21 to 81010

Note on communication: Emails & Remind texts will typically be answered within 24 hours. Please understand that messages sent outside of traditional “office hours” will often not be answered until the following school day.

Grading

To reward students for the hard work that they are doing in band, students will earn a grade in middle school band. This is to recognize the efforts that they put forth to become true musicians. “General Band Expectations” later in this document coincide with the grading of this class. The school grading scale will be followed, and the students’ grade will be broken into three categories.

Individual Contribution (Lessons) - 25%

Ensemble Contribution (Rehearsals) - 25%

Performance Contribution (Concerts) - 50%

Grading Descriptions

1. Lessons- 25%

Lessons are a **vital** part of the band curriculum. Students work in solo/small groups according to their instrument and individual ability level to gain new skills. The lesson times are assigned by the teacher to coordinate with the student's schedule. The lesson grade will be determined by the teacher and will include both lesson attendance and preparedness for the lesson. *If a student must miss a lesson for any reason, it must be made up within a week.* Students can sign up for make-up lessons in the band office.

2. Rehearsal- 25%

Points will be earned throughout group band rehearsals. Points can be earned by coming to band on time with all materials and ready to learn. Professional rehearsal etiquette (General Band Expectations found later) will ensure maximum points are earned.

3. Concert Participation- 50%

We work very hard to put together outstanding performances for our friends, family, and community members, and students will be rewarded for those efforts as well! Our performances act as a cumulative test in our class. All concert dates are considered mandatory, and the dates are provided in advance. Please put those dates on your family calendars right away to avoid any conflicts. Unexcused absences count as 0.

Practice

Because everyone progresses at a slightly different pace, at-home practice is a very important factor in musical success. The expectation to take the instrument home every day. It is best to break the practice into 4 to 5 blocks of time throughout the week, rather than trying to complete it all in one sitting. Without practice, students fall behind and it is NEVER fun to feel behind! Practicing is the homework that makes you better and keeps this class fun and successful! This year's goal is 100 minutes per week.

Following these guidelines will help us to create a successful music learning environment while maintaining the current high standards of musical performance. If you have any questions regarding these policies, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Band Dress Code

Concert performances:

7th and 8th grade students will wear “concert black” for all concert performances. The following are the two options for all students:

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Black long sleeve button-up w/ a colored tie2. Black dress pants w/ a black belt3. Black long socks4. Black dress shoes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Modest Dress or skirt & shirt (length covers knees when sitting or includes black leggings)2. Black dress shoes
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Attendance Policy

As with any organization, attendance and participation are crucial to the overall success of the group. **All rehearsals and performances are mandatory**, and students will be held accountable for tardiness, absence, and lack of participation. The success of the band program depends on the dedication and attendance of all members of the group. All events and rehearsals are scheduled and provided to students in advance. **Please note that non-school sponsored activities are not considered an excused absence.** Please make arrangements in advance to be available at all scheduled performances. Students with unexcused absences will receive a failing grade for that performance. All dates are attached in this letter so please put them on your calendar to avoid conflicts.

If you believe a conflict is unavoidable, contact Mr. Melillo as far in advance as possible.

Required Supplies - 7th Grade

Note that instruments and other supplies (reeds, mouthpieces, drumsticks, etc.) offered through Amazon or online stores are often poor quality. Remember to consider local retailers who support music education in our area!

Required Supplies (For All):

- 1/2 to 1 inch 3-ring binder with page protectors for holding our music.
- Sharpened Pencils (No pens please)
- “Technique and Musicianship” Bruce Pearson and Ryan Nowlin (not needed for percussion)
- Nametag on your instrument case

Brass Players:

- Valve or Slide Oil
- Tuning Slide Grease
- "Student Instrumental Course" Book 2 (Intermediate) (Be sure to get the "Student" book and **not** "Studies and Melodious Etudes" book)

Woodwind Players:

- Intermediate Rubank Method book (Your instrument)
- Minimum of 3 Vandoren Reeds Strength: 2 ½ (You will need to replenish these throughout the year)

Percussionists:

- Pair of medium yarn marimba mallets

- Pair of concert snare sticks

- Stick bag

- "Intermediate Snare Drum Studies" by Mitchell Peters

- “Fundamental Studies for Mallets” by Garwood Whaley

Required Supplies - 8th Grade

Required Supplies:

- 1/2 to 1 inch 3-ring binder with page protectors for holding our music.
- “Technique and Musicianship” Bruce Pearson and Ryan Nowlin (Same as last year. Not needed for percussion)
- Sharpened Pencils (No pens please)
- Nametag on your instrument case

Woodwind Players:

- Intermediate Rubank Method book (Same as last year)
- Minimum of 3 Vandoren Reeds Strength: 2 ½ or 3 (You will need to replenish these throughout the year)

Brass Players:

- Valve or Slide Oil
- Tuning Slide Grease
- "Student Instrumental Course" Book 2 (Intermediate) (Be sure to get the "Student" book and **not** "Studies and Melodious Etudes" book)

Percussionists:

- 2 Pairs of medium yarn marimba mallets

- Pair of concert snare sticks

- Pair of medium timpani mallets

- Stick Bag

- “Rudimental Cookbook” by Edward Freytag

- “Sequential Studies for Four Mallet Marimba” by Julia Gaines (check locally or tapSPACE.com)

2021 – 2022 BVMS Bands Calendar

The times indicated are the actual performance times;

Report times for students will be announced as each date approaches.

Tuesday, October 26: Turkey Supper/Indoor Concert <i>8th Grade Band only. BV High School Performing Arts Center</i>	6:00pm & 8:00pm
Thursday, December 9th: Jazz Tour <i>All Jazz Band Musicians - BV Elementary Schools</i>	All Day
Monday-Friday, December 6 th - 10 th : MS All-State Band Auditions <i>For all interested students. Get materials from Mr. Melillo ASAP.</i>	After School
Tuesday, December 14th: Winds of Winter BVMS Concert <i>All Band Students - BV High School Performing Arts Center</i>	7:00pm
Monday-Thursday, January 3rd - 6th: All-State Jazz Band Auditions <i>For all interested students. Get materials from Mr. Melillo ASAP.</i>	After School
Friday - Saturday, February 4 th -5 th : MS All-State Jazz Band <i>Held at Mitchell High School for any selected students.</i>	All Day
Friday - Saturday, March 4 th -5 th : MS All-State Band <i>Held at Mitchell High School for any selected students.</i>	All Day
Monday, March 7 th : Middle and High School Jazz Concert <i>All Jazz Band Musicians – BV High School Performing Arts Center</i>	7:00pm
March 26th: BV Solo Festival (20 Minute Time Slot) <i>All Band Students - BV Middle School</i>	8:00am – 12:00pm
Monday, April 11th: All-District Mass Band Concert <i>BV High School Activities Center</i>	7:00pm
Tuesday, April 12 th : District Percussion Concert <i>All Percussionists – BV High School Activities Center</i>	7:00pm
Monday, May 16th: Sounds of Spring Band Concert <i>All Band Students – BV High School Performing Arts Center</i>	7:00pm

Thank you for supporting your child’s musical endeavors!

Please log on to our band website at www.bvmsbands.com for updated announcements.

General Band Expectations

Understand that wherever you are, you are always a representative of your program. You are a walking reflection of Brandon Valley Middle School, the Brandon Valley Music department, and the BVMS Band. The expectations of being part of the Brandon Valley Bands:

- 1) **Be respectful** to yourself, your peers, your teachers, and your area.
 - a) Use appropriate language and be honest/fair
 - b) Follow directions the first time
 - c) Treat your equipment and school facilities well; pick up anything left behind
 - d) Only water in band room; no gum allowed
- 2) **Be prepared.**
 - a) Plan ahead and arrive at least 10 minutes before the start time
 - b) Bring required materials (instrument, music, pencil, etc.)
- 3) **Be positive.**
 - a) "The power of positivity"
 - b) Growth mindset states you are not fixed to that which you cannot achieve yet.

Signature of Agreement

- We have read the Band Syllabus together and understand the expectations
- We have looked through the calendar dates for the performance year
- We give permission for pictures/video taken at band rehearsals and performances to be posted on social media and the band website

Student Print _____

Student Signature _____

Parent Print _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____