

ASA E. LOW JR. INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Panther Band Handbook



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Welcome to the Panther Band!

We are excited that you have chosen to become part of this AWARD WINNING organization!

The success of any organization is dependent on the spirit, pride, teamwork, dedication and cooperation of its members. Certain rules, policies and procedures are necessary so that the overall goals of the group are met and the welfare of each individual member is best served.

The Panther Band is divided into like-instrument classes for the purpose of teaching the basic fundamentals of playing a band instrument including good tone production, technical skills, musical expression, and knowledge of basic music theory. Our goal this year is to provide each band student the necessary knowledge and experience to be successful in band during middle school and beyond.

By accepting membership in the Panther Band, you agree to perform to the best of your abilities and work together with all the members of the band in making this year's band the finest musical organization that we can be. We do not expect every band member to be a virtuoso player and performer, but what we do expect is for all members to give 100% effort – every time, all the time!

By being a member of the Asa Low Panther Band, you will be making a commitment that includes:

- Being a member of the band for the entire school year and attend all required band events
- Following all policies and procedures of the Panther Band
- Giving your best effort to improve as a musician
- Maintaining a progressive, positive attitude toward band and school throughout the year



Panther Band Uniform

The band uniform consists of the Panther Band t-shirt, blue jeans, and athletic shoes. The t-shirt is specially designed each year for our band, and every student is required to own one.

Panther Band Performances

Attendance at all performances and at all pre-scheduled rehearsals listed below is required, unless stated otherwise in pre-performance communication.

Concerts are extensions of the classroom and are the highlight of the learning process. An excuse for absence will only be accepted in the event of illness with doctor's note, or a major family emergency. A phone call or a note from parent to director is expected for a missed rehearsal or performance. The rehearsal or concert may or may not be excused at the discretion of the director. Students receive two grades for each performance – one for Participation, and another for their standard of Performance. An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a "0" both as a Performance grade and a Participation grade.

Please note that a student who must miss a performance because of a non-school sponsored athletic event will not be excused. This includes "Select" sport team activities.



Panther Band Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time	Location
12/13/2022	Winter Concert	6:30 p.m.	Willie Pigg Auditorium
05/11/2023	Pride of Texas Music Festival	During school	Alley Cats Hurst
05/11/2023	Spring Concert and Awards	6:30 p.m.	MISD Center for Performing Arts

We will send out updates as we get them. Please add all events to your family calendar on your phone/computer/datebook so that we may avoid conflicts. All dates will be kept current on the band website also.

Class Supplies

- The band T-shirt (will be ordered soon after school starts)
- 1” **Black**, clear-view three-ring binder (We use a cover page, so it must be a clear view front. We also want all of the binders to match in color so that they look uniform for our performances)
- Pencil bag that fits in the rings of the binder
- 1 Mechanical pencil
- 1 Red pen.
- One pink, one green, and one orange highlighter

Instrumental Supplies

- All students must have their own instrument (school owned instrument will be issued around the third week of school).
- Woodwinds must have at least 3 performance-quality reeds and a reed case to store them in (except flutes).
- Care kit for you instrument.
- Band Book: Tradition of Excellence for your instrument (Percussion: Wessel’s Snare and Mallet Books).
- Percussion must have supplies required by Mr. Scarce.
- Wire music stand for HOME USE. Don’t bring it to school.
- Tuner/Metronome to be used for home practice. The Tonal Energy App on a phone or tablet will be an acceptable substitute.

School owned instruments

A limited number of the more expensive band instruments are owned by MISD for the purpose of balancing the instrumentation district-wide and maintaining performing bands at every level. These instruments include oboe, bassoon, French horn, euphonium, and tuba. There is a yearly non-refundable maintenance fee of **\$70.00** for each student playing a school-owned instrument due at the start of each school year. This fee is used to offset the cost of yearly maintenance done each summer. Please note that this \$70.00 fee does not cover damage by misuse or accidents – fault or no-fault. Students using school-owned brass instruments (French horn, euphonium, baritone and tuba) will be required to purchase a mouthpiece, separate from this fee.

IMPORTANT! Students are responsible for any loss or damage caused through *neglect* or *misuse* of school-owned property. School instruments are issued to students with the understanding that the instrument will be returned to the school in the same condition in which it was issued. Periodic inspections of school equipment will be made throughout the year to insure proper care and operation. There will be a charge to repair any damage to a school-owned instrument.

Mansfield ISD **is not responsible** for any **lost or stolen** instrument while on the school premises. We recommend that you check with your insurance agent to determine if your child’s school-owned instrument is covered by your homeowner or renter’s insurance. A separate insurance policy may be purchased which may cover school-owned instruments – check the band website for more information.

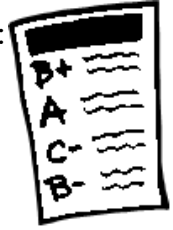
An Instrument Check-out form will be handed out separately to those students who play school-owned instruments for parent/guardian signature, which describes the condition of the instrument and outlines the policies for school-owned instruments.

Band Grading Policy

Grading Procedures

See the Grading Guidelines in the Appendix of the Intermediate Student Handbook and see Board Policy EIA Local: Academic Dishonesty.

All six week band grades will be determined using the following criteria:



50% **Daily Work/Participation**

- Has instrument and actively participates
- Has working binder and supplies
- Has pencil
- Takes home instrument *each* day (Weather concerns are taken into consideration)

Rehearsal preparation – Students are accountable for practice assignments given during band classes. Students are expected to be able to show reasonable progress toward these practice assignments when asked to play in class.

Some possible ways for loss of grade each day are outlined below:

Missing pencil/music/band binder out of order or broken – 5 point deduction

Missing Instrument – 20 point deduction.

*Missing instrument due to documented repair will cause **no** loss in points with parent or repair shop note.*

30% **Performance Grades**

- Concert Performances

Band is a performance based class; therefore, **attendance at all performances is required**. Students will receive a grade for all of our performances. If a student is absent from a performance for any reason, the grade will be put into the gradebook **as a ZERO**. **All** students will be given the option to complete a make-up assignment. If the absence was excused, students will be able to earn UP TO 100 points for the make-up. If the absence was unexcused, students will be able to earn UP TO 70 points for the make-up. In order to make-up the grade, students will perform the music individually for the director. Excused absences are for **illness and family emergencies only**. If there is an emergency and you know you are not going to be able to participate in a performance, please contact the band director as soon as possible so that adjustments can be made. Excused absences require a note, e-mail or phone call. **Students will NOT be excused for any other reason - including sporting events, camping trips, birthday parties, etc.** Remember - we are on the same team. We must work together.

- Wester audition/Solo contest (Spring semester)

20% **Major Grades**

- Playing/chair tests
- Music Theory/written tests
- Objective pass offs

Classroom Behavior

Citizenship grade, (E, S, N, U) will be given in band as in other academic subjects and is a reflection of your child's behavior and attitude in the classroom and during performances. Expectations are:

- Proper respect will be shown to the director and peers at all times.
- Proper care will be shown with all school-owned material (instruments, music, other equipment, etc.).
- Teacher expectations are for quiet and orderly classes, rehearsals, and performances.
- Students are to play their instrument only when directed by the teacher.
- Students are not to touch or play another student's instrument.
- Running, horseplay, or any similar activity is prohibited at all times in the band hall.

Consequences for disregarding band conduct guidelines will be assigned according to school discipline policy. Extreme and persistent discipline issues may result in removal from band if deemed necessary by parent and director conference. A student who is assigned to AC (In-school suspension) at the time of a concert may or may not be able to attend the off campus event at the discretion of the band director and/or administrator, depending on when the AC placement begins and ends.

Eligibility Requirements a.k.a. "No Pass – No Play"

For participation in some of the scheduled band activities this year, students must meet eligibility requirements in accordance with TEA (Texas Education Association) and UIL (University Interscholastic League) rules. These extra-curricular activities are the **Pride of Texas Music Festival** and the **Solo Contest**, both which take place in the spring semester. These rules are often referred to as "No Pass – No Play", and they apply to all extra-curricular activities throughout a student's school career, including school-sponsored athletic activities and band. Band programs throughout the state are bound by law to follow these rules for grades 6 - 12.

The "No Pass – No Play" rules state that a student must pass every course on a given Report Card with at least 70%, in order to be eligible for extra-curricular activities occurring during the **following six-weeks**. A student who is determined to be ineligible may **regain** eligibility by meeting the previous requirements at the 3rd week point of the following Six Weeks, provided the Progress Report occurs before the date of the event. Semester grades are never used for eligibility. Students will be notified of their eligibility status by their teacher in a timely-manner before a "No Pass – No Play" event.

Additionally, the Panther Band has a policy that students must receive a conduct grade of "E" or "S" in their band class the previous Six Weeks to reach eligibility status.

Note: Ineligible students are not allowed to participate in performance or travel with the band at TEA/UIL sponsored events.

In order to earn the privilege to perform at off-campus events, students must:

- **Have NO discipline referrals**-this includes office referrals, AC, BIC, suspension and citizenship grades of N's or U's
- Pass **ALL** school classes for the previous six weeks
- Actively participate in all full band rehearsals and concerts. An unexcused absence from a performance makes a student ineligible for the spring trip.
- Have a grade of 90% or higher on playing tests for concert/contest Music (which means practicing)

We cannot stress enough that public performances outside of the school day are earned privileges, not "rights." ONLY those students who meet these standards will be allowed to attend off-campus events.

A major part of having a great band, one that is worth a student's time and effort, is for students to learn to meet their responsibilities. **We set very high learning and responsibility standards for our students and the majority of our members always meet them.** For this reason, our band has a reputation as one of the finest Intermediate School bands in the metroplex!

Please be sure your child understands that to **earn** the privilege of performing at Contests, Concerts and other special events, he/she must meet all the requirements listed above starting **NOW**, and thereby forming the **habits** necessary for success!

A Brief Practice Guide for Parents and Students

The key to success in band is practice time outside of class. Parent encouragement and support are also vital to a beginning band student's success. Encouraging and supporting a student's practice time is a large part of this. Practicing at the same time every day will help establish a set routine. Also, there are fewer interruptions if both family and friends know that a certain time has been set aside for practicing.

When to Practice

Approximately the same time every day in 20-30 minute intervals.

At a time when the student is physically and mentally alert.

At a time when there will be the least amount of distractions.

Where to Practice

In a place as free from distraction as possible from TV, phone, stereo, other people, etc...

In a room that is neither too "live" or "dead" acoustically.

In a place where the student feels comfortable.

Equipment

A chair with a straight back and no arms for good posture. (No sitting on beds, please!)

A music stand for good posture and playing position.

A mirror for viewing hand, embouchure, and body position, especially in the early months of band.

A metronome and tuner, if available. The metronome will develop and reinforce good rhythm and pulse while a tuner will help students develop a characteristic, in-tune sound.

A computer or CD player, if available. The band method book, *Tradition of Excellence*, is enhanced with a computer component, including recording capabilities.

What to Practice

Warm-up materials - long tones, slurs, scales, exercises, etc.

Class assignments – method book, band pieces, test material, etc.

Private lesson music - assigned by the private lesson teacher.

Sightreading – Play unfamiliar music from sight using an etude or song book.

Student-choice music - play "fun" music for enjoyment (popular music, Disney favorites, etc.).

To help your child be successful:

Invest 5-10 minutes each day to hear your child play his/her songs, exercises and studies. Ask them to **EXPLAIN** what they are doing. If they cannot explain what they are doing and perform for you, then they are probably not understanding what we are doing and will need some help and encouragement from you.

You do not have to be "musically trained" to tell if your child is succeeding. If it looks like a duck, smells like a duck and quacks like a duck, it probably is a duck! You will find this time of interaction between you and your child to be very rewarding.

Until your child establishes a **routine** of practicing, instrument maintenance and transporting materials, please remind her and help her get all this organized. If your child is not in the habit of carrying a whole bunch of "stuff" to a whole lot of places each day (soccer, piano, choir, church, dance, cheerleading, softball, chess club etc etc etc!!), he/she may need a lot of reminding (maybe "nagging!!")

Private Lessons

The Mansfield ISD Band Program offers private instruction from some of the finest professional musicians in the DFW area. Private lessons are offered as enrichment, not as remedial instruction. As a general rule, those students who take private lessons become leaders in the band due to the individualized instruction they receive from our private lesson staff. We highly recommend private lessons for the complete development of each student's potential as a musician, but they are not required.

Lessons are 20-25 minutes in length and are taken once a week during band class or before or after school. However, lessons that are taken during class may be several minutes shorter due to the length of the class period. The cost for a 20-25 minute lesson is \$19.00.

For more information about private lessons, including names and contact information of our private lesson teachers, please check the Panther Band website. This website is updated throughout the year with current lesson teachers, phone numbers and email information. Each have been selected by an interview and audition process which includes a complete background check. Only these teachers may teach in our school facilities. These teachers are not employed by MISD, but are rather independent contractors, most of whom make their living completely through teaching private lessons. **You may contact a teacher directly to set up lessons. I will send their info out soon.**

Communication

I will use a web based program called Charms as my primary source of communicating with you. Skyward is just not user friendly for mass communication. I will still send notes home about important events, and an email to look for the note.