



LAUREL HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Department of Music

BAND HANDBOOK



2018-19

A note from Mr. Miller....

If you are a new 6th Grade student, welcome to the Laurel Highlands Middle School Band Program! If you are a 7th or 8th grader, welcome back! Either way, I am so happy that you have decided to become a part of what promises to be a GREAT and REWARDING experience!

The LHMS Band has become a great source of pride for our school and community over the last few years and I hope to continue the trend this year. We will work hard to become better musicians and have a lot of fun along the way! We have a lot of exciting performance opportunities planned for this year and I can't wait to get started!

Parents and students: Please use the information in this handbook to learn about how the band operates and what our expectations are. We have accomplished so many great things over these past few years and the information contained in this handbook will help us to continue the tradition! If you have any questions about anything in this handbook or anything that isn't covered in it, please don't hesitate to send me a note or an email and I'll get back to you as soon as possible!

If we are all on the same page, it will be a fantastic experience for the students, the parents and even the teacher!

I am really looking forward to reconnecting with the 7th and 8th Graders this year and continuing our journey together. Also, I am very excited to meet our new 6th Grade Band Members and begin our new band experience! This is going to be a GREAT YEAR!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Mr. James B. Miller, Director of Bands and Instrumental Music

Laurel Highlands Middle School and Elementary Schools

LAUREL HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

2018-19

Mr. Miller, Band Director

jim.miller@lhsd.org

lhmsbands.weebly.com

Course Title: Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble (Grades 6-8)

Course Description:

The Middle School Band Classes will provide students with knowledge of their instrument, other instruments, elements of music, proper fundamentals of breathing and posture, study of age appropriate band literature, and rehearsal techniques. Special emphasis will be placed on developing musicianship and ensemble responsibility through performance in a variety of settings. Each band level (Concert Band-Symphonic Band-Wind Ensemble) progresses in demand of musical responsibilities.

Goals:

Each student will be taught and be able to demonstrate the fundamentals of performing on their instrument, self-motivation, self-discipline, and self/group awareness.

Instructional Objectives:

Each student will receive a Level I Progress Sheet at the beginning of his / her middle school band program listing all objectives of the band course of study. Upon completion of Level I, students will immediately begin work on the Level II Progress Sheet with the goal of completing it by the end of the middle school band program.

While the complete list of objectives is too lengthy for this syllabus, the instructional objectives of the course(s) can be summarized in the following six categories.

- I. The student will demonstrate the language art of reading and interpreting music notation.
- II. The student will perform music independently and with others.
- III. The student will describe, analyze and create music.
- IV. The student will evaluate music by using critical thinking and listening skills.
- V. The student will demonstrate a knowledge of music history and cultural heritage.
- VI. The student will participate in the cultural / musical life of the community through involvement in local and regional music / arts opportunities.

Core Arts Standards:

Through the completion of the Instructional Objectives listed above, the student will obtain the skills and concepts necessary to meet the requirements of the Core Arts Standards for Music listed below.

- Creating - Imagine, Plan and Make, Evaluate and Refine, Present
- Performing - Select, Analyze, Interpret, Rehearse/Evaluate/Refine, Present
- Responding - Select, Analyze, Interpret, Evaluate,
- Connecting - Personal Experiences, Societal/Cultural/Historical Context

SYLLABUS (continued)

Units, Topics, Themes:

- Intro to / Review of Ensemble Skills
- Individual Musical Skills and Concepts
- Winter Concert Prep / Performance
- Spring Concert Prep / Performance
- Halloween Parade Prep / Performance (7th/8th Grade)
- Veteran's Day Prep / Performance (Wind Ensemble)
- Holiday Parade Prep / Performance (7th/8th Grade)
- Americanism Day Parade Prep / Performance (7th/8th Grade)

Texts and Materials: (*required)

- 1" 3-Ring Binder* - clear sheet protectors, 3 dividers
- Essential Elements 2000, Book 1*, 6th Grade Concert Band and 7th Grade Band (Symphonic Band)
- Essential Elements 2000, Book 2*, 7th and 8th Grade Bands (Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble)
- Additional supplemental methods supplied by Mr. Miller*
- Selected sheet music for band, chorales, chamber groups, and solos*
- Smart Music (optional) – a great home practice computer program. See it at: <http://www.smartmusic.com>
- Digital Metronome or Metronome App* for home practice (We use the Tempo app in class)
- Digital Tuner or Tuner App* for home practice (We use the Tonal Energy app in class)
- SightReadingFactory.com (optional) - website with sight reading exercises
- Wire Music Stand for home practice
- Google Classroom* - online classroom supplied at no cost through LHSD

Assessment:

- Performances – Dates are provided on website (lhmsbands.weebly.com), white board and handouts – All performances are required.
- Active participation in class – have all required materials
- Playing Proficiencies / Pass-Offs
- Written / On-Line Assignments and Assessments

Assessment Breakdown:

- Performances – 125 points per performance (Unexcused Absence results in 0 points earned for performance)
- Daily Ensemble Skills (active participation /instrument/music/pencil/rehearsal etiquette) – up to 400 points per marking period
- Playing Proficiencies – up to 100 points per proficiency
- Written or Online Assignments/Assessments - Point values vary

Extra Credit:

- Private lessons
- Attendance at pre-approved professional, semi-professional, and high school/college concerts/recitals
- Participation in various workshops/clinics
- Participation in performing groups outside of Laurel Highlands Middle School (i.e. PMEA Jr. High District Band, VFW Band)



LAUREL HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Department of Music

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN - BAND

RULE: Refrain from any action or behavior that interferes with the rehearsal in any way or infringes on another student's opportunity to learn or the teacher's opportunity to teach.

Examples:

- Talking out of turn
- Playing your instrument out of turn
- Touching others or their belongings
- Moving from your assigned seat or area without permission
- Neglecting or misusing band instruments and/or equipment

REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS: It is each student's responsibility to meet these expectations daily in order for the student as well as the entire band to achieve success in this course.

- Pencil on EVERY Stand
- Music / Handouts Organized in a Binder with Sheet Protectors (Music removed from sheet protector while rehearsing it)
- Mark Corrections (The more you mark, the less we stop!)
- Maintain Eye Contact with the Director / Conductor
- Instrument to Mouth on Count-Off
- Correct Playing Position and Posture
- Raise Hand for Comments and Questions (Comments & Questions should be limited to the music being rehearsed at that time. Other Questions / Comments should be discussed before / after rehearsal)
- Positive Body Language and Energy
- Apply What You Already Know
- Your Behavior Is Productive & Effective

CONSEQUENCES: Actions have consequences. Positive actions will help us to have the best band experience possible. If everyone does their best, we will succeed. It really is that simple! However, from time to time, young people make mistakes and poor decisions. It's a fact of life. When this happens, we have a progressive system of consequences that we will follow to help curb bad decisions / behaviors so we can move forward and have a great rehearsal.

- 1st Offense - Verbal Warning
- 2nd Offense - Temporary Alternate Seating Assignment
- 3rd Offense - Instrument to be put away & Alternate Seating Assignment for the rest of the rehearsal. Phone call home to parents to inform them if this behavior continues detention will be assigned. Lunch detention may be assigned.
- 4th Offense - One after-school detention will be assigned and a discipline referral will be filed in the office.
- After 4th Offense - Additional detentions and immediate office referrals will take place. Removal of student from band program will be discussed.
- **SERIOUS INFRACTIONS** of school-wide rules or actions that place anyone in harm's way will result in the immediate referral to a principal.



LAUREL HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND

DAILY CLASS PROCEDURES

In order to create and maintain an environment appropriate for making music and working together, the following class procedures will be followed.

1. Students will wait along the wall outside the band room before being invited into the band room. This allows the previous class to exit the band room without creating a “traffic jam” and allows Mr. Miller to present the day’s objectives and expectations to the class.
2. Once entering the band room the students will place their books/belongings in a cubby or under their chair.
3. Students will gather their instrument, music, method book, pencil, etc. and move directly to their assigned seat.
4. Once the student has arrived at his/her seat, he/she will inspect his/her instrument to insure it is in proper working order. This is done without sound. If the instrument is in need of maintenance, the student may get the necessary supplies and address the instrument’s needs. If the instrument is in need of repair, see Mr. Miller at the end of rehearsal.
 - a. Maintenance - valve oil, slide grease, tighten screws, replace worn/broken reeds, springs reattached, etc.
 - b. Repair - frozen valves / slides, pads / corks needing replaced, broken solders, stuck mouthpieces, broken drum heads / mallets, etc.
5. Student will look to the board / screen to see the day’s rehearsal agenda and put music in order for the rehearsal.
6. Rehearsal will begin with a full ensemble warm-up and / or lesson on new concepts. Each student will participate to the best of his/her ability. The student will mark music for what needs practiced and/or refined.
7. The student will participate in all aspects of the day’s rehearsal. If the teacher is working with another section, the student will participate by remaining silent until invited to join back in.
8. Talking should be kept to a minimum and only during transitions from one activity to another.
9. When the rehearsal ends, each student will return his/her instrument to the proper storage space with the instrument case completely latched. The student will return to his/her seat until dismissed by the teacher.
10. Students will be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell. The teacher may elect to dismiss the students by section or all at once depending on the day.

Water Breaks - Students are encouraged to keep a water bottle with them during rehearsal to take a sip as need throughout the rehearsal. This is especially important in September and May. Only WATER is allowed in the band room.

Restroom Breaks - Students needing to use the restroom should do so during the class change before entering the band room. If necessary, students may ask to use restroom before the rehearsal starts. Only one student at a time will be permitted out of the band room. Students are encouraged to not ask to use the restroom once the rehearsal starts. Only medical reasons or extreme emergency requests will be honored once rehearsal starts.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The success of any band is determined by the quality of performance by its members. Every performance plan is designed in a way that all performers are needed to attend and participate to insure success for all. For this reason, all performances are MANDATORY!

In addition to performances, attendance at all in-class rehearsals is also mandatory. Students will rarely be excused from band rehearsal to go to another class to make up missed work. Students WILL NOT be excused from class at anytime during the two weeks prior to a performance!

It is understandable that sometimes absences cannot be avoided. Generally, students will be excused from a rehearsal or performance if they are too ill to be in school or if there has been a death in the family.

Other absences will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis between the band director, school administration and parent/guardian.

Every attempt is made to avoid conflicts with other school events and athletics when the performance schedule is made. For this reason, students will not be excused from performances to participate in other school events or athletic events that have been re-scheduled for the same day as our performance.

Please consult the LHMS Band Performance Schedule at this time to check for any conflicts with your personal/family schedule. If you have any conflicts that cannot be avoided, please complete the "Request for Excused Absence Form" and return to Mr. Miller by Friday, Sept. 14, 2018. This will help in planning for future performances.

If a conflict arises after September 14, 2018, please fill out the "Request for Excused Absence Form" and turn it in as soon as possible for consideration.

Requests for Excused Absences will generally not be approved when submitted within two weeks of a scheduled performance except in the case of extenuating circumstances.

Absences with no prior notification will be automatically UNEXCUSED and all performance points will be forfeited with no chance for make-up.

Please see **GRADING POLICY** to see how absences will affect your grade in band.

Note: Because band is a PERFORMANCE-BASED class, students missing more than one performance in a semester or two performances in a year may be subject to removal from the ensemble.

GRADING POLICY

Band is a performance-based class. There are 4 main components to the class:

- Daily Ensemble Skills
- Individual Home Practice Assignments
- Playing Proficiency / Music Pass-Offs
- Performances

Each student is expected to contribute his/her best effort to each of these four components. By doing so, we can insure that each student is achieving his/her potential as well as pulling their own weight with the ensemble.

Daily In-Class Rehearsal

The Daily Ensemble Skills grade will be posted twice each marking period. Once for Progress Reports and again for Report Cards. This grade encompasses all of the student's daily responsibilities such as participation and preparation for each day's class. A complete grading rubric will be distributed to the students in class.

Individual Home Practice Assignments

It is expected that all band students practice on their own outside of band class to master the concepts, skills and music presented in class. The amount of time required to achieve mastery is different for each student. From time to time, specific practice assignments will be given to assess where the students are and how to best help them progress. Each assignment will have a unique point value.

Playing Proficiency and Music Pass-Off

Playing Proficiencies are formal playing assessments where the student demonstrates his/her best effort at performing music. This may include scales/technical exercises, excerpts of performance music or even sight reading. These assessments are submitted via video to Google Classroom or played live in front of Mr. Miller.

Music Pass-Offs are spot-checks for performance music. These usually consist of a section or two that will be performed during a regular rehearsal.

Performances

All of the work that goes into the three components above is geared towards preparing the students to give many public performances throughout the year. Each member of the band plays a vital role to the overall success of the band. For this reason, every student is expected to participate in every performance. If a student misses a performance, it hurts the quality of that performance. Each student will be awarded up to 125 points for each performance they attend and participate in. Missed performances cannot be made up, however, students with excused absences can be given make-up assignments to earn recovery points towards their 9 weeks grade.

Note: Student illness and death of a family member are generally the only accepted excuses for missing a performance. Other absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis between the band director, school administration and parent/guardian.



LAUREL HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Department of Music

LAUREL HIGHLANDS MIDDLE SCHOOL BANDS

Family Performance Contract

Please sign and return by FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2018

PARADE PERFORMANCES (7th/8th Grade Only)

Halloween Parade

Wednesday, October 24, 2018
6:00pm / Report 5:00pm
Downtown Uniontown

Home for the Holidays Parade

Thursday, November 29, 2018
Evening (Exact Times TBA)
Downtown Uniontown

Americanism Day Parade

Wednesday, May 1, 2019
7:00pm / Report 6:00pm
Downtown Uniontown

Hopwood Pike Days Parade (Tentative)

Saturday, May 18, 2019
Afternoon (Exact Times TBA)
US Route 40, Hopwood

CONCERT PERFORMANCES

Veteran's Day Ceremony (Wind Ensemble Only)

Friday, November 9, 2018
During the school day
LHMS Auditorium

6th Grade Winter Concert

Tuesday, December 11, 2018
6:30pm / Report 5:45pm
LHMS Auditorium

7th & 8th Grade Winter Concert

Tuesday, December 18, 2018
6:30pm / Report 5:45pm
LHMS Auditorium

Music In Our School Concert (Grade TBD)

Tuesday, March 26, 2019
6:30pm / 5:45 Report
Laurel Highlands High School Auditorium

6th, 7th & 8th Grade Bands Spring Concert

Monday, May 13, 2019
6:30pm / Report 5:45pm
LHMS Auditorium

PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We commit ourselves to the aforementioned parade and concert dates for the 2018-19 academic year. We also recognize that an excused absence will result in an alternative assignment as prescribed by the director and that an unexcused absence results in a loss of points for the performance. All performances are graded.

Student Signature

Date

Parent(s)/Guardian Signature

Date

Retain ONE COPY at home for personal reference

Daily Ensemble Skills Evaluation Form

Wind Ensemble / Symphonic Band / Band 6

Student Name: _____

Marking Period: _____

CONCEPT	CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION	SCALE	GRADE
Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student has Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Pencil • Instrument • Mutes, Valve Oil, Reeds, Sticks/Mallets, etc. 	Never _____ Rarely _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____ Always _____ 0 ***** 3 ***** 5 ***** 7 ***** 10	
	Musical Preparedness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has practiced the music prior to rehearsal • Student has identified terminology and symbols in music 	Never _____ Rarely _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____ Always _____ 0 ***** 3 ***** 5 ***** 7 ***** 10	
Active Participation	Music <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student rehearses the music with the ensemble during the class • Student uses proper technique • Student performs with good posture 	Never _____ Rarely _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____ Always _____ 0 ***** 5 ***** 10 ***** 15 ***** 20	
	Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student listens to directions from the conductor • Student answers questions about the music when asked • Student asks for clarification when encountering a new concept 	Never _____ Rarely _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____ Always _____ 0 ***** 5 ***** 10 ***** 15 ***** 20	
Rehearsal Etiquette	Student's attention is focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • Music • Ensemble 	Never _____ Rarely _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____ Always _____ 0 ***** 5 ***** 10 ***** 15 ***** 20	
	Student's behavior during class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student refrains from talking during rehearsal • Student plays at appropriate times when directed by the conductor • Student marks music to indicate sections which need to be practiced or needs special focus 	Never _____ Rarely _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____ Always _____ 0 ***** 5 ***** 10 ***** 15 ***** 20	
Final Grade			

Comments: _____

INSTRUMENT AND EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

1. All band students are to have an instrument in good working order for each day of class.
2. Working order means:
 - Woodwinds: all keys open/close correctly and seal correctly
 - Clarinets/saxophones: good mouthpiece and ligature
 - Woodwinds: all joints fit together properly and cork is in good condition
 - Brass: all slides/valves move freely and are correctly lubricated
 - Brass: instruments are free from dents that prohibit air from moving freely through the instrument
 - Brass: mouthpieces are clean and in good condition. Not dented or flattened on the end.
 - Percussion: must have a stick bag containing 1 pair SD-1 General Snare Drum Sticks, 1 pair SD-2 Bolero Snare Drum Sticks, 1 pair M3 Keyboard Mallets, 1 pair M6 Keyboard Mallets and 1 pair T3 Timpani Mallets
3. All Woodwind and Brass students should have a care kit to maintain the condition of their instruments:
 - **Flute**- Swab, Polishing Cloth
 - **Clarinet**-Swab, Cork Grease, Polishing Cloth, Reed Guard with Name on it, Reeds (**Students must have 3 good reeds in their reed guard with them at their seat**) Reeds may be purchased at local music stores. Recommended Vandoren (Blue Box) strength 2 ½ - 3.
 - **Saxophone**-Swab, Cork Grease, Polish Cloth, Neck Cleaner, Reed Guard with Name on it, Reeds (**Students must have 3 good reeds in a reed guard with them at their seat**) Recommended Vandoren (Blue Box) strength 2 ½ - 3.
 - **Trumpet**-Valve Oil, Snake, Polishing Cloth, Tuning Slide Grease, Mouthpiece Brush, Valve Casing Brush
 - **French Horn**-Cleaning Cloth, Snake, Rotor Oil, Tuning Slide Grease, Mouthpiece Brush
 - **Trombone**-Snake, Super slick Crème, Super slick Plus Slide Treatment, Spray Water Bottle, Tuning Slide Grease, Mouthpiece Brush, Polishing Cloth
 - **Low Brass**-Snake, Valve Oil, Tuning Slide Grease, Mouthpiece Brush, Valve Casing Brush, Cleaning Cloth
4. All students should work towards owning the following items for home practice sessions:
 - Wire music stand
 - Digital metronome (stand alone or app - I recommend Tempo by Frozen Ape, Inc.)
 - Digital tuner (stand alone or app - I recommend Tonal Energy by Sonosaurus LLC)

5. All instruments must be treated with care and respect. These are the tools that we use to make music! They are too delicate and too expensive to treat other wise!
6. All instrument cases must have and ID tag with the following information:
 - Student Name
 - Phone Number
 - "LHMS Band"
7. At the conclusion of rehearsal, all instruments (other than concert percussion) are to be placed in their cases. Cases are to be completely latched (not just one!) and should be placed in the students assigned storage cubby.
8. Do not let your friends play your instrument! This includes percussion and school-owned instruments!
9. If your instrument is in the shop for a repair, make sure your parent submits a note to Mr. Miller stating this. Also, bring your mouthpiece to class. If there is a school-owned instrument available, you can still play!
10. Check your instrument often for loose screws, stuck slides and other abnormalities. If these types of things are caught quickly, they can often be repaired in the band room at no cost to you!

RECOMMENDED STUDENT AND STEP-UP INSTRUMENTS

Although some people think off-brand products are improving, they are generally very inferior to the established music lines. I find it better to avoid them entirely. Quality instruments give your child a much better chance to succeed. Some of the off-brand names are so bad that I hesitate to allow students to begin on them. They are made of cheap metal and poor materials that are not durable and play out of tune. Worse, no repairman can find any parts for these “economy” instruments when they need repair. Below is a list of the preferred instruments for the Laurel Highlands Middle School Band Program. I recommend these instruments because of their history of quality craftsmanship, high-grade materials, and the recommendations of the finest teachers. You may purchase these instruments with confidence.

Instrument	Brand	Model	Mouthpiece	Quality
Flute	Jupiter	CEF551	n/a	
	Yamaha	YFL-221	n/a	student
	Gemeinhardt	2SP	n/a	student
	Yamaha	481H	n/a	professional
	Yamaha	581H	n/a	professional
Oboe	Fox	333	n/a	student
	Yamaha	211	n/a	student
	Fox	400	n/a	professional
Bassoon	Fox	41	FoxCVX bocal	student
	Fox	222	FoxCVX bocal	professional
Clarinet	Selmer	CL300	VanDoren M13	student
	Yamaha	YCL220	VanDoren M13	student
	Yamaha	YCL450	VanDoren M13	intermediate
	Buffett	R-13	VanDoren M13	professional
Alto Sax	Yamaha	YAS26	Selmer C*	student
	Selmer	Paris Reference 54	Selmer C*	professional
	Yamaha	YAS62II	Selmer C*	professional
Tenor Sax	Yamaha	YTS480	Selmer C*	intermediate
	Yamaha	YTS62II	Selmer C*	professional
Trumpet	King	601	Bach 5C	student

	Yamaha	YTR2335	Bach 5C	student
	Bach	Strad37/180	Bach 3C	professional
French Horn	Holton	179	Holton Farkas MDC	both
	Conn	8D	Schilke 27	both
Trombone	Jupiter	432L Deluxe	Bach 6 ½ AL	student
	Yamaha	YSL354	Bach 6 ½ AL	student
	Jupiter	636 Series	Bach 6 ½ AL	intermediate f attach.
	Yamaha	YSL448G	Bach 6 ½ AL	intermediate f attach.
	Bach	42BO	Schilke 51	professional
	Conn	88HO Symphony	Schilke 51	professional
Euphonium (Baritone)	Yamaha	YEP211	Bach 6 ½ AL	both
	Yamaha	YEP201	Bach 6 ½ AL	both
	Jupiter	468 Series	Bach 6 ½ AL	both
Tuba	Yamaha	YBB621	Bach 18	student/intermed.
	Miraphone	186-4U	Bach 18	professional
	Meinel Weston	2145 CC	Bach 18	professional

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT RENTALS & SALES

Located in and around Uniontown

Micarelli Music

354 Morgantown Street
Uniontown, PA 15401
(724) 438-9311
micmusic.net

Atkins Music Center

166 West Crawford Avenue
Connellsville, PA 15425
(724) 628-2450
atkinsmusic.com

Volkwein's Music (Pittsburgh)

138 Industry Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275
800-553-8742
volkweinsmusic.com

O B Fawley Music Co

1804 Earl L Core Road
Morgantown, WV 26505
(304) 292-3351
fawleymusic.com

RECOMMENDED ONLINE INSTRUMENT SALES

Woodwind and Brasswind

wwbw.com

Musician's Friend

musiciansfriend.com

Sam Ash Direct

samash.com

Chuck Levin's Washington Music

buyfromchucks.com

BAND UNIFORM

For concerts and parade performances, each student is required to wear the uniform described below.

- LHMS Band Polo (purchased through Mr. Miller)
- Black Pants (Dress Pants / Khakis, NO JEANS, JOGGERS, SWEATS, WARM-UPS OR ANYTHING WITH HOLES IN IT)
- Solid Black Belt - if needed
- Black Socks - Calf Length
- Solid Black Shoes (Casual Shoes, Tennis Shoes or Marching Shoes are fine as long as they are solid black)
- Hair is to be done neatly and out of the face. Ladies with long hair, French braid is recommended for parades, Gentlemen with long hair, pulled back out of the face for parades. Please no "Man-Buns".
- Make sure you are clean and showered before all performances and that your clothes are clean and wrinkle-free.

PMEA FESTIVALS

The Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) is a statewide nonprofit organization of over 5,000 members, dedicated to promoting the musical development of all Pennsylvanians. The present membership evolved from a small group of band directors dating from 1933. Today, the organization includes those engaged in music instruction at all levels, from preschool through college and university, as well as those in the music industry, merchandising and publishing. The organization promotes and supports quality music education, learning and performance as well as promoting and supporting music education in schools and communities. PMEA is affiliated with MENC: The National Association for Music Education.

PMEA hosts a number of festivals for students to participate in throughout the year. Generally, students are accepted into these festivals either through an audition or application process. Festivals are hosted for each PMEA district in the state.

Laurel Highlands School District resides in PMEA District 1 East along with all schools in Fayette and Westmoreland Counties and the eastern half of Allegheny County. PMEA District 1 West encompasses Greene and Washington Counties and the western half of Allegheny County.

Students in the LHMS Band are eligible to apply for one of two middle school level band PMEA Festivals held throughout the year. 7th and 8th Grade students can apply for the PMEA District 1 East Jr. High Band Festival. The deadline for applications is usually October 22 so they can be forwarded to the festival host by November 1. 6th Grade students are eligible to apply for the PMEA Greene/Fayette County Elementary Band Fest. The festival host sets the deadline for this application each year.

Once students are selected for a festival, they will receive a folder of music to prepare for the festival. Mr. Miller will schedule some time with each student either individually or in groups to help them prepare their assigned parts. The students will participate in the festival that is hosted by a school in our PMEA district. They will join with students from many other schools to rehearse and perform a concert under the direction of the host director and a guest conductor. The guest conductor is usually a college level conductor or band director of some notoriety.

Other information regarding these festivals will be sent home with the student application.



PARENTAL SUPPORT

The most important thing a parent can do for the LHMS band is to show their child that they support and value their membership in the band. This can be accomplished in many ways...

- Encourage your child to practice at home regularly! Help your child find a quiet place to practice on his/her own and help them organize a practice routine. Give a listen every now and then to encourage their efforts and note their progress.
- Make sure their instrument is in proper working order. Middle school students are still learning about the instruments they play and may not always know if their instruments are working properly. Before school starts, have a qualified instrument repair shop have a look at it to make sure its in good shape. Don't wait until the week of our first concert to have it looked at!
- Help your child make a schedule or calendar to be at all performances. While certain conflicts cannot be avoided, help your child make adjustments to his/her schedule when possible so they can enjoy the full band experience!
- Attend our performances!! It means the world to these kids to perform for a full house. All of our evening concerts and parades are open to the public so invite relatives, friends and neighbors to come to a performance featuring your child!
- When considering the purchase of a new instrument, please consult with Mr. Miller before making a purchase. There are many "deals" out there on the internet. Most of these deals benefit the dealer and not the consumer. While I would never tell a parent how much to spend on an instrument, I will encourage you to purchase an instrument of high quality. Generally speaking, it is better to go to one of the music retailers listed in this handbook to buy an instrument. Buying instruments on internet auction sites often ends in disappointment. These instruments are usually constructed of low quality materials and poor craftsmanship. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Miller!

There are other things parents can do to support the band as well. These include...

- Help organize our annual T-shirt / Polo sale. Each an LHMS Band T-shirt is designed and sold to students and parents. A little help with this activity goes a long way!
- While we have only done a couple, any fundraising ideas would be great! At this point, the band could use any additional financial support we can get.
- We always welcome the help of parents with our equipment. If you want to lend a hand before or after a parade getting things organized, it would be greatly appreciated!
- It would be nice to decorate the stage for our concerts. If anybody has any ideas, I would love to hear them! It would be nice to have some light refreshments at concerts as well!