

H.B. du Pont Middle School
735 Meeting House Road
Hockessin, DE 19707
(302)239-3420

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended for H.B. du Pont Middle School students and their parents. The handbook is given to each student when they enter our band program. It was designed to give students and parents a broad overview of the band program: the calendar, an explanation of performance opportunities, and a review of classroom rules and procedures. Communication between the band director, the band students and their parents is absolutely essential for a successful band experience. My most important objective is to ensure that each child have a positive and productive band opportunity and I believe this handbook will allow students and parents to have a good idea of what “band is all about”! The last page in this handbook is a brief statement with a place for both student and parent signatures – please complete this page and have your child return it me by the date indicated on that page. I look forward to working with you – please be in touch if you have any questions. Thank you!

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AFTER SCHOOL REHEARSALS

After school rehearsals for band students at H.B. du Pont Middle School are typically not needed except for the Honor Band. At the beginning of each month, students will be given a monthly calendar listing all “after hours” events, rehearsals and sectionals. With the many clubs and activities offered, there will undoubtedly be conflicts. Students need to make every attempt to attend scheduled rehearsals as listed on the calendar or at the very least split their time evenly. Makeup rehearsals will also be offered to assure that students are able to maintain their status.

AUDITIONS

Students in the band can audition for placement in the Concert Band and Honor Band during September and again in January. Audition materials will be handed out on the first day of school. Placement in these groups will be based on the audition. The best strategy for performing well at this audition is to practice the material thoroughly and to go over it with your private instructor so as to be totally familiar and comfortable on the day of the audition. Auditions are a part of any performing ensemble and usually help to make you a stronger musician – use them as a learning experience!

CHAPERONES

Being an effective chaperone is an important part of a successful trip. Being a chaperone is an “active” role that requires a person to be an engaged part of the activity/field trip. Being a chaperone is not the same as simply attending an activity/field trip with your child – the responsibilities and expectations are greater. If you have any questions regarding your role as a chaperone that is not answered in the information below, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Letts prior to the date of the trip.

Attire: Chaperones may be asked to participate in all of the field trip activities. Chaperones should wear clothing appropriate to the nature of the field trip.

Communication: Chaperones will be asked to give their personal cell phone numbers. If a chaperone is unwilling to give their personal cell phone number out, then an acceptable alternate means of communication must be established. If an alternate means of communication cannot be agreed upon, the chaperone may be asked to forfeit his/her duties prior to the trip.

Medical: Chaperones may be made aware of medical conditions of students in their care. Medical information is provided on a confidential need-to-know basis and such information is expected to remain confidential after chaperoning duties are complete. You may contact our school nurse at 239-3423 at any time for further clarification.

Money: Chaperone may be asked to help manage student monies. Chaperones will never be expected to pay student expenses (aside from their own children). Chaperones should only receive money from a student in the presence of a witness and the money should be counted out to agree on the total. Chaperone expenses may not be covered on all trips and chaperones should expect to cover their own expenses.

Personal Electronics: Chaperones are expected to follow the same field trip rules (district) regarding the use of personal electronics. Any personal stereo equipment (CD players, iPods, etc.) must be used with earphones and must not be audible to others. These items can be easily lost or broken, so if you bring them, do so at your own risk and the district assumes no liability or responsibility for replacement. Video's or DVD's that are played on the bus must be rated G or PG only – this also applies to personal DVD players.

Student Grouping and Behavior: Chaperones will be expected to monitor student behavior and intervene in the case of inappropriate behavior. Groups are expected to stay together unless explicitly directed otherwise.

Supervision: Chaperones will be assigned and are responsible for a group of students. Groups may join together if they wish, but each chaperone is ultimately responsible for those students assigned to them. *Chaperones must never leave students unattended.* Chaperones should avoid being alone with a student. Additionally, chaperones may be partnered together for safety purposes and if this is the case, partners are expected to stay together throughout the activity/trip.

Transportation: Chaperones may be asked to sit in a specific seat on the bus (or the transportation used during a trip). While we will make every attempt possible for you to sit with or near your child, it may not be possible. Chaperones are expected to follow the same district/bus company policies regarding eating on the bus as the students are.

Thank you: Your assistance as a chaperone is truly appreciated. Without you, we may not be able to provide field trips and special opportunities. If you ever have any questions regarding your responsibilities, the field trip itself or anything else, please do not hesitate to ask.

Additional Information: Every activity/field trip will have an additional set of chaperone responsibilities and expectations. Chaperones will be expected to be knowledgeable about those expectations as well as the ones outlined here. Chaperones are strongly encouraged to ask any questions that they may have about their responsibilities prior to the field trip. Thank you again for giving your time to support our HB students!

CLASS/REHEARSAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

1. Students should enter the room and move directly to their assigned seat.
2. Students are expected to have their instrument, book, music and a pencil every day.
3. Students should be attentive and actively involved in rehearsals.
4. No gum, food or candy in mouth during band!
5. When the director steps to the podium, students need to hold instruments and stop talking immediately.
6. Students should not touch any instrument or equipment that is not theirs.
7. After class has started, students should play their instrument only when instructed to do so by the director.
8. To replace sheet music that has been lost -- \$0.50 in advance. Students may not share books or music unless authorized by the director.
9. Students need to show respect to all other people in the room – always.
10. A note is needed to excuse a student from rehearsal form dental/medical reasons.
11. Students must have their names on the outside of their instrument case.
12. When leaving the room, students should leave the music stand and chair in the proper position, put their instruments and materials away, and move out of the room with regard for other student's equipment and instruments.

CONCERTS

Each Band will have multiple performance opportunities throughout the school year. Students are expected to participate in all performances – these are valuable experiences that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. If a student is in school on the day of a dress rehearsal or performance, they are expected to be at that rehearsal or performance. Students who inform Mrs. Letts within two school days of the concert that they will not perform are considered unexcused except in cases of documented illness or emergency. Please provide a written note for any excused absence. Unexcused absences will affect a student's band grade.

Students must meet the following expectations in order to participate in concerts:

- Students must attend “dress” rehearsals
- Students must demonstrate their appropriate instrument part in all music to be performed.
- Students must be in good academic standing in all classes.
- Students must have an acceptable attendance record for the year.
- Students must have an acceptable discipline record for the year.

As with the festivals and field trips, it will be the director's prerogative to restrict participation in a concert if a student's musical contribution or behavior is not to the standard of the H.B. du Pont Middle School Band.

CONCERT ATTIRE

All Band members must wear the following to every performance. All clothing should be clean and neatly pressed. Our appearance is a very important part of each performance. It is the director's prerogative to prohibit a student from performing if he/she is not in the proper uniform.

- **Long** black skirt or black dress pants
- Plain white long-sleeved blouse/shirt
- Black dress shoes (no sneakers)
- Black socks or neutral pantyhose
- Long necktie for gentlemen
- Belts for gentlemen

FIELDTRIPS/FESTIVALS

Participation in festivals and fieldtrips should be considered as privileges – not as rights. Please take your responsibilities seriously. Festival/fieldtrip requirements are as follows:

- Students must attend both concerts and “dress” rehearsals.
- Do your best to be prepared musically.
- Follow band room rules.
- Obey school policies (suspension or exclusion from school can disqualify you).
- Students must have an acceptable attendance record for the year.
- Good academic standing in all classes

It will be the director's prerogative to restrict attendance on a fieldtrip if a student's behavior or musical contribution is not to the standard of the H.B. du Pont Middle School Concert Band. It is important to remember that we, as members of the Concert Band, represent not only ourselves, but the Band and our School when we perform and must do all that we can to protect our status and reputation.

The H.B. du Pont Bands have traditionally performed at Music Festivals across the country, in the Bahamas and Canada. These festivals provide the following educational value:

- The opportunity to perform and receive adjudication from the nation's foremost music educators and in outstanding venues.
- To experience different cultures beyond those available in Delaware.
- Learning camaraderie and team work with music as the focal point.
- Receiving recognition, acknowledgement and awards for our school and community.

FUNDRAISING

This year the band will participate in several fundraisers. The profit from these will be used to help pay for festival trips that the band will take this year. Students will receive individual credit to offset the cost of any trips that we take this year.

We do not encourage door-to-door selling. Focus your efforts on family, friends, and neighbors you know.

- Collect payment when orders are taken. Make checks payable to “H.B. du Pont Band.”

Additional fundraisers planned for the school year will include, a Valentine Candy Gram Sale for the students and two family nights at local family restaurants. Fundraisers are to assist the students and families with the cost of the festival trips and incidental expenses of the band program.

GRADES

Sixth Grade Band and Concert Band are full year courses that meet daily along with the other academic courses. Band members receive a grade that is averaged into their GPA. The band grade DOES count towards honor roll and membership in the National Junior Honor Society. Grades are based on performance in the following areas:

- Effective participation in class
- Completing and handing in play charts
- Preparation of class and lesson assignments (playing tests)
- Technique (performing scales, rhythms, rudiments, etc.)
- Written tests and/or theory assignments
- Performances

HOME PRACTICE

Band students need to be encouraged to practice at home. My suggestion for home practice is five to six days a week for 20 or 30 minutes of **ACTUAL PLAYING TIME**. Each student is different and you and your child will need to work out the specifics regarding their practice: how often, how long, when, where, etc. Play charts will be given out at the beginning of each week and collected and graded on the same day of the following week. Aside from the grade, what usually happens is that a child's performance in class improves dramatically from the regular practice and they end up with better placement in auditions and better playing grades in class. See “Practice Tips” for more on this.

INSTRUMENTS

All instrument cases must be tagged with the students' name. It is also recommended that you “personalize” your case so others do not mistake it for theirs.

A repairman should check your instrument each year. Instrument repair specialist David Kee of Musically Sound (484-702-2302) makes pick-ups and deliveries to H.B. du Pont upon request. **Always** call ahead to arrange pick-up and delivery.

It is very important for each student musician to have an instrument and mouthpiece that will enable him/her to develop skills to the greatest extent possible. Mouthpieces included with instruments for beginners are designed for a fourth grade student to be

successful. As students mature physically, there is a need to change to an appropriate mouthpiece. Ask your private teacher or Mrs. Letts for suggestions.

Also, as students begin to develop a higher skill level, they should consider an upgrade for their instrument. In most cases, Mrs. Letts suggests that students preview a professional quality instrument. An intermediate quality instrument might be fine, but in the long run the student will benefit by the better quality and parents will benefit by not having to buy an additional upgrade in a few years. Please consult Mrs. Letts or your private teacher before selecting an instrument.

INSTRUMENT STORAGE

There are several instrument storage areas located in the band room. Students will be assigned an area where they should keep their instruments during the day (labeled with their name). Each year, we have students choose to put their instruments in their hall locker, or in another teacher's classroom – please discourage your child from doing this – these areas are not always secure.

JR. HIGH ALL-STATE BAND

Jr. High All-State Band is a group of approximately 100 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students chosen through audition, to represent the state of Delaware. 7th and 8th grade band students who, in the opinion of the band director, are very advanced will be asked to audition for the group. It is a very high honor to be chosen to perform in this group. Students need to prepare seven scales and a required solo for the audition. The dates for the 2018-2019 school year are: 10/16 – applications due; 1/12 – auditions for all instruments; 1/19 – weather contingency; 3/2 – a reading rehearsal from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon; 3/28 – 3/30 – All-State rehearsals and concert.

MATERIALS, METHODS AND SUPPLIES

Sixth Grade Band students will use Accent on Achievement Books 1 and 2.

Seventh Grade Band students will use the Accent on Achievement Book 2 and the Hal Leonard Intermediate Method.

Eighth Grade Band students will use the Standard of Excellence Book 3.

All method books are available in the band room and cost \$8.00. Please make checks payable to “*H.B. du Pont Band*” or send cash.

All students will receive band music to use. The music should be kept in good condition with needed markings made in pencil. Students should initial their music in the upper left corner. Students will be provided a folder for their band music and method book. Students will be responsible for replacing any damaged or missing music.

Students who play oboe, clarinet, bassoon, or saxophone should have an assortment of reeds to start the school year, as well as some cork grease. Brass players will need valve, key, or slide oil as well as some tuning slide grease.

ORGANIZATION

Concert Band

Consists of 7th and 8th grade students who demonstrate skills necessary to perform complex literature (Grade 2/3). Students are able to independently perform: Scales at an appropriate tempo and range, varied articulations, musical phrases and solos, and appropriate rhythms. Seventh and Eighth graders will rehearse separately on a daily basis. Combined rehearsals for the full Concert Band will be scheduled as needed.

Symphonic Band

Consists of 6th and 7th grade students who demonstrate skills necessary to perform literature with demands for some independence of parts (Grade 1/2). Students are able to perform basic articulations, musical phrases, and appropriate rhythms. Sixth grade band meets daily.

Beginning Band Class

Open to 6th and 7th grade students with no experience and interested in learning to play flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba or mallet percussion. Beginning Band Class is also open to students who have prior experience but wish to change their instrument. This class meets daily.

Honor Band

Some special performances require the use of a smaller concert band. Students will be selected for membership in this ensemble based on audition, musicality and instrumentation needs. This band will have an audition in the fall and then again in January for the spring semester. Membership during one semester does not guarantee membership during another. This band will rehearse during one Activity Period weekly and twice a month after school.

Jazz Ensemble

This will be a lab band that will rehearse during one Activity Period weekly. The primary performance is for the Café of the Arts normally held in March. This band will have the following instrumentation: 5 Saxophones, 4 Trombones, 5 Trumpets, 2 Percussionists (set drummers), 2 Pianists, 1 Electric Guitar, and 1 Electric Bass. Additional instruments can be added for some pieces.

PARENT SUPPORT

Parent support is one of the most important aspects of a successful band program. Your support comes in many different forms. Please encourage your child to do their best – playing their instrument and exhibiting self-discipline and respect towards others. Please encourage your child to form a regular home practice habit and ask your child to play for you occasionally. The H.B. du Pont Middle School Bands are very active performing groups, and we always need parents to assist with our trips: helping with equipment, traveling with students on buses, and being present at performances to offer encouragement are all ways in which you can help our program. All Parents chaperoning trips will be required to read and sign the Chaperone Handbook. The parent support at H.B. du Pont has been fantastic and I am looking forward to another great year! Please fill out the volunteer form in the back of this handbook and return it with the parent/student signed statement.

PERCUSSION

The percussion section in each grade level is limited to eight players. This is due to the composition of the music that we perform (grades 1-3). If needed, auditions for percussionists will be held at the end of September. Any student who does not make the percussion section is very welcome to take our beginning band class and learn another instrument.

Students in the percussion section are required to have snare drum sticks, a mallet bag to store/carry their equipment, a drum pad and a music stand for use at home. Eventually, percussionists should also have mallets for timpani, xylophone and suspended cymbal. **These final items do not have to be purchased immediately.** I have included order information from Steve Weiss Music. I encourage you to shop around.

Timpani mallets:	Mike Balter MBT3 General	\$22.00
Yarn mallets:	Mike Balter (rattan handles 13R)	\$22.00
Xylophone mallets:	Steve Weiss (birch handles) hard rubber	\$ 9.00
Snare Drum sticks:	Weiss SWGSW Glenn Steel 350 Concert	\$ 8.00

A mallet bag should be large enough to add to the student's collection of mallets and sticks. A good recommendation is the Steve Weiss Mallet Caddy, which costs \$24.00.

PRACTICE TIPS

1. Set aside a certain time each day and stick to that schedule.
2. Practice in a quiet place without interruptions.
3. Practice with correct posture, correct instrument placement and hand position.
4. Use a music stand.
5. Write down the time you start and then do not watch the clock. When you have accomplished your goals, write down the time you stop.
6. Divide your practice time into sections. Work on each section until it improves.
7. Make note of mistakes. Work to correct them. Check key signatures and problem spots that need special attention.
8. Practice 20 to 30 minutes each day. Practice at least five days each week.
9. Listen to tone, articulation and phrasing. Strive for excellence.
10. Fill in the practice sheet at the end of your session. Make note of your accomplishments each day.

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER

1. Provide as good an instrument as you can and a safe place to keep it. Instruments should be maintained in good mechanical condition.
2. Arrange a regular time to practice and see that the student sticks to this schedule. Daily practice is the key!
3. Arrange the practice schedule so that it does not conflict with outdoor play, a favorite TV program or household duties.
4. Provide an area that adapts itself to study and practice with a music stand. Students should sit with correct posture and hold the instrument correctly with good hand position.

5. Recognize that most students do not practice on their own – remind them!
6. Show parental interest in practice, study and membership. Be generous in your praise and encouragement.
7. Encouragement will be needed when the student becomes frustrated. Some things in music are easily learned while others require intense and repeated application. Praise musical achievement.
8. Listen for “organized sound” not random notes.
9. Create a musical atmosphere in the home. Listen to music, buy CD’s as gifts, attend professional concerts, select PBS on TV, etc...

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private instructors on most band instruments may be found at the University of Delaware Community Music School, the Music School of Delaware, Accent Music or Music and Arts Center. There is also a list of other instructors posted in the band room and on our website. A private lesson consists of one on one instruction with an expert teacher on a particular instrument. By studying in this manner, students progress at a quicker pace, learn a broader repertoire and maintain a higher motivation and interest level. Private lessons are highly recommended to challenge students with material technically more advanced and assist students with audition material such as that needed for Jr. High All-State Band. Private instructors are also used for assisting students who are having difficulty with the material being covered in class. Please contact Mrs. Letts if you need suggestions for a private teacher.

RESOURCES

Suppliers, Instruments, Repairs

Accent Music	302-999-9939	
Concord Music	302-454-7664	
David Cottrell	410-658-7080	Brass Instrument Repair
The Drum Pad	302-284-4664	
David Kee (Musically Sound)	484-702-2302	Instrument Repairs will pick up at H.B. du Pont
Explorers Percussion	888-523-7867	Percussion Supplies (www.explorerdrums.com)
Bernard Kosc	302-368-2291	Woodwind Instrument Repair
Giardinelli’s	800-288-2334	Mail Order Instruments and Supplies (www.giardinelli.com)
Interstate Music Supply	800-982-2262	Mail Order Instruments and Supplies (www.interstatemusic.com)
Music and Arts Center	302-633-0600	
Steve Weiss Music	215-329-1637	Percussion Supplies
Woodwind & Brasswind	800-348-5003	Mail Order Instruments and Supplies (www.wwandbw.com)
Washington Music	301-946-8808	Mail Order Instruments and Supplies

SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS

It is always desirable for students to have their own instrument, but in the case of larger instruments (bass clarinets, tubas, baritone saxes, etc.) it is necessary for students to borrow school instruments for the year. Parents will need to fill out and return an **Instrument Loan Form**. There is a fee of \$20.00 to cover initial supplies and I do recommend you purchase your own mouthpiece. Where possible we provide a “practice horn” to keep at home. These instruments are issued in good working order. In the event repairs or maintenance is needed, you will be responsible for the charges. The band director will select a technician to perform the repairs.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Rehearsal Procedure

Students should enter the room on time and move directly to their assigned seat. They should have their instrument, book, music folder and a pencil every day. Students should be attentive and actively involved in rehearsals and demonstrate correct playing posture at all times. All non-band related items should be stored on the shelves or under the chairs during rehearsals.

The teacher will dismiss class with enough time to put instruments and music away. Students should leave the music stand and chair in the proper position, put their instrument and materials away, and move out of the room with regard for other student's equipment and instruments.

Performances

Performances provide a valuable educational experience that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. This is an important part of the class and students are required to participate. Formal performances are presented outside our building. Students will need to report on time and remain for the entire performance. Rehearsals scheduled immediately prior to a performance are as important as the concert. Arrange your schedule accordingly. Please do not schedule dental work just before a concert!

SUCCESS IN THE BAND CLASS (AND MOST OTHER THINGS TOO)

Consider these tips and try to implement them in all your endeavors – you will find that they will greatly improve your outcomes:

1. Be prepared
2. Be coachable
3. Put in some effort
4. Have a good work ethic
5. Have passion for what you are doing
6. Demonstrate good body language
7. Have a positive attitude
8. Do extra
9. Be on time
10. Have energy

A FINAL THOUGHT – WHY IS THIS STUFF SO IMPORTANT?

Band is a large ensemble that depends on the efforts of all members to be successful. Unlike many other classes, in a music ensemble, if one student does not do his or her part, the entire group suffers. At H.B. du Pont, we want our performing ensembles to be fun, enriching experiences for the students. However, when we say *fun*, we mean fun doing something well.

An important life lesson is that it takes hard work and perseverance to do anything well and that the road to success may not always be an exciting one. As members of a music ensemble, students will learn that the “grand prize” awaits them at the end of the road when they have grown as musicians and have also prepared a wonderful concert they can be proud to share with an audience. There will undoubtedly be many high points along the journey to success, but there will also be some frustrations. The challenge will be to stay focused and not get discouraged.

When all students respect classroom behavior expectations, there will be many more high points along the way. Music is about learning something that will be loved and appreciated for life. That life-long appreciation must find its roots in a quality music program that the students will remember and be proud of for years to come.

BAND VOLUNTEERS

A Band Boosters Group is currently being organized and committees are now forming. There are no meetings to attend! Just let us know in which areas you can help and we'll contact you when the need arises. Fill this out and return with the Parent/Student signed statement on the reverse side.

_____ **Chaperoning**

_____ **Concerts**

_____ **Fundraisers**

_____ **Photographer (pictures at band events)**

_____ **Videographer (concert videos)**

_____ **News Releases/Publicity**

_____ **Parties**

_____ **Not Available**

Name _____

Student's Name _____

Phone # (H) _____ **(W)** _____

E-mail Address _____

I am available _____ **Days** _____ **Evenings**

H.B. DU PONT MIDDLE SCHOOL BANDS

**STUDENT/PARENT SIGNED STATEMENT
AND
CONTACT INFORMATION**

This statement indicates that both the student and the parent have received this Band Handbook, have read it, and will keep it to refer to during the school year. This signed statement needs to be returned to Mrs. Letts as soon as possible.

SIGNED STATEMENT

I have read the information provided in the H.B. du Pont Band Handbook and understand the requirements for membership in band.

Student name (please print) _____

Student signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian name (please print) _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____ Date _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT INFORMATION

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone # (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____

Parent email (for band information) _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
