



Southmoore Instrument Arts Program

Band Handbook

2023-24

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2023-24 SHS Instrumental Arts Department Staff

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Visit us at southmooreband.com

The Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department

Welcome to the Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department! The Southmoore Instrumental Arts department serves as a welcoming place for students to come and experience music while at the same time gaining valuable skills to help mature into productive young adults. Our curriculum centers on the study of music and the activities that result through its sequential study and participation in various outdoor and indoor ensembles. Additionally, our students grow as individuals because of the discipline, high expectations, leadership emphasis, and social opportunities experienced in our program.

The Southmoore High School Band Student Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a succinct explanation of the Southmoore Instrumental Arts Program focusing on its purpose, curriculum, expectations, and assessment of students. Patrons desiring a much more detailed explanation of band participation should read the New Member Handbook. That publication provides even more detailed information concerning even the most routine aspects concerning band participation. The handbook is available by request or may be downloaded at southmooreband.com.

Purpose

It is the purpose of the Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department to provide a comprehensive and thorough music education through performance in large outdoor and indoor ensembles, various chamber groups, and solo literature. Through these musical experiences, we seek the following:

- To create meaningful musical experiences, the positive memory of which will last a lifetime, by developing in students an enhanced aesthetic sensitivity for music as an art form through disciplined study and application for its various elements.
- To develop the whole person by creating an environment through music and the arts that will foster, challenge, motivate, develop, and demand the students to become responsible and mature young adults in all facets of their life.
- To provide a meaningful, sequential study of music to improve the student's quality of life through physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth.
- To promote class, character, leadership, and citizenship in all activities. The Instrumental Arts Department will serve as an exceptional ambassador for Southmoore High School, both at home and abroad, by displaying our musicianship and professionalism in all activities and events.

Curriculum Overview

The fall curriculum primarily includes participation and skill development in all aspects of the modern marching band activity. The performance schedule includes Southmoore football games and several marching contests throughout the fall.

The foundation and driving force of the department takes place during the late fall and spring semesters through students' performance in large concert band ensembles as well as solos and chamber groups. The curriculum focuses on increasing each student's musicianship while creating valuable aesthetic music experiences through the performance of high-quality literature. The performance schedule will include local concerts and participation in Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activity Association (OSSAA) contests.

Our department includes four jazz ensembles meeting third, fourth, fifth and sixth hour. The jazz ensemble is dedicated to performing the finest of jazz literature including varying jazz standards, contemporary works, and music outside of the jazz idiom. The group will have an active performance schedule from playing at various school functions and community events, to formal concerts and contests.

Dance and visual arts are a vital aspect of our curriculum offered through our colorguard program. All students, regardless of musical background, are invited and encouraged to participate. Membership in some ensembles are by audition only.

Students wishing to pursue a supplementary leadership curriculum are encouraged to be a part of the band student leadership group. Leadership students play a major role in advancing the band purposes and gaining valuable leadership training.

Statement on Competitive Contest Performances

The Southmoore High School Band will enter and compete in competitive events as a complementary means to encourage students to reach their full potential while providing a valuable and educational public performance venue. Considering that any judgment of the arts is truly subjective in nature, the results in terms of numerical scores and rankings will never be a focus of the department or the method in which we evaluate a successful performance or the overall achievement of the program.

Membership Expectations

To provide a high-quality music education for our students; the Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department must require high standards. It is not our desire to formulate a comprehensive list of "do's and do not's" covering every conceivable situation, but instead provide the values that each band member should apply to every situation. The following are an example of some of the traits expected of each band student.

The Southmoore Band Student will nurture a remarkable **CULTURE** by...

- ...always making themselves available to **ATTEND** each rehearsal and performance.
- ...demonstrating an **ATTITUDE** that seeks to make the band better and contributes to a DYNAMIC environment.
- ...developing a **WORK ETHIC** that will allow them to put forth a maximum amount of effort with minimum complaint.
- ...understanding that appropriate **DISCIPLINE** is instrumental in achieving excellence.
- ...cultivating a great amount of **PRIDE** within the band and be proud to be a member of the program.
- ...maintaining high **ACADEMIC** achievement and remain continually eligible to fully participate in all band activities.
- ...seeking to improve their current **MUSICIANSHIP** to ensure personal growth and to contribute to the band.
- ...fostering a gracious **RESPECT** for all members of the band and further respect the equipment and facilities provided by the school district.
- ...being actively **COMMITTED** to the band and be passionately seeking to further its goals and accomplishments
- ...always exhibiting first-class **CHARACTER**, especially when representing the band.
- ...having **FUN** through their participation in band resulting from high achievement and positive interactions.
- ...possessing a passionate desire to achieve **EXCELLENCE** in all our activities.

Performance Ensembles

Performance for a live audience is a major emphasis of the curriculum. The Southmoore Instrumental Music Department offers many performance ensembles including marching band, concert bands, chamber groups, winterguard, winter percussion, and other various ensembles. The Director and/or Assistant Director of Bands shall determine which, if any, ensembles in which the student will participate.

Enrollment in band does not necessarily guarantee that the student will be a member of any performance ensemble. The Director and/or Assistant Director of Bands may further remove a student from any performance ensemble at any time. This action will most often be administered as the result of a student choosing to not properly maintain the membership expectations.

Southmoore Patrons, Parents, and Alumni Association

Members of the Southmoore Parents, Patrons, and Alumni Association (SBPPAA) include all parents/guardians of SHS Band Students. The organization is dedicated to aiding the band by providing transportation, supplies, financial assistance, logistical support, and a wealth of emotional support for our students. This organization is a vital component of our success and further provides parents/guardians a fun and productive means to play an active role in their child's band experience.

All parents/guardians of band students are expected to take part in the organization to help further the purposes of the Southmoore Instrumental Arts Program. More information concerning this group can be obtained at most band activities and at sabercatband.com.

Colorguard

The Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department includes a vibrant and active state of the art guard program as a vital member of the overall program. Our Colorguard employs all aspects of modern color guards including dance, weapons, and flag. The Guard program may also include a competitive winterguard during the late fall and spring semesters. The

winterguard is meant to provide an additional means of skill development as well as offer further public performance opportunities for guard students.

Membership in the Southmoore Colorguard Program is open to all students attending Southmoore High School and our feeder elementary and junior high schools. We encourage any student who has ever considered guard, enjoys dance, and is interested in formal dance training, or simply wants to be part of a first-class hard-working organization, to strongly consider becoming a part of the Southmoore Colorguard. Membership in the guard is by audition only. Audition information is made available in the spring with auditions taking place in before the end of the school year.

Though prior enrollment in band is not necessarily a requirement for membership; students with band experience will be expected to maintain their skills on their instrument to contribute musically during the indoor performance season. Enrollment in band for the entire 2023-24 school year will be required of all guard members unless an exception is made by the Director of Bands.

Rehearsal and Performance Attendance

Perfect attendance to all band activities is a vital component to the program's success. Unlike most classes, the achievement of one student greatly depends on the attendance of every other student! It is for this reason that attendance is highly monitored and a substantial component in determining the student's band grade.

Attendance Requirements

Students are required to attend every rehearsal and performance of all ensembles in which they participate as determined by the Director of Bands.

Absences

The band maintains an active rehearsal and performance schedule therefore conflicts will inevitably take place. In the case that students or parents feel an absence simply cannot be avoided the student must take the following steps to avoid a grade deduction:

1. The student must turn in a "Absence Request Form" to the Director of Bands at least 48 hours before a rehearsal absence and at least 10 days prior to a performance absence. The Absence request form is online at southmooreband.com
2. The Director of Bands will review the request form and further discuss the matter with the student or parent/guardian if necessary. The Director of Bands will either accept or deny the request.
3. If the request is accepted than the student will receive a "no grade" for the event. The "no grade" will not affect the overall grade positively or negatively. If the request is denied, the student will be expected to attend the event and a zero ("0") will be earned by the student if they are absent.

If a student is absent without any prior notification to the Director of Bands, then the student will earn a grade of zero for the event. The Director of Bands may assign a "no grade" if he determines that the circumstances surrounding the absence warrant such action. The Director of Bands will strive to be fair when deciding to either accept or deny your absence request. Please note that your past attendance record will certainly be a major consideration when making these decisions.

General Attendance Policies

- Work is not an excused absence.
- The band calendar is made available long in advance. Please use this information when planning social events, family vacations, doctors' appointments, and arranging your work schedule to avoid absences.
- School scheduling conflicts (zero hour classes, athletics, other activities, etc.) will be handled on an individual basis and will involve direct communication between the Director of Bands and the sponsors involved. The Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department is committed to finding compromises that allow students to participate in other activities and will therefore strive to reach a fair solution in each case, however, potential loss of band excellence will play a major role in these decisions. Work is still not an excused absence.
- An unexcused absence from school resulting in an absence from rehearsal is considered an unexcused rehearsal absence. Please note that your band grade and/or any band letter application may be affected by an unexcused rehearsal absence.

Student Assessment

Assessment criteria in terms of point distribution and percentage of the final grade is determined each semester and dispersed through a class syllabus. Generally, there are two major areas in which the student will be assessed:

Attendance Record

Students will be expected to arrive on time, dressed correctly, and fully participate to receive full credit for attendance. Attendance will generally encompass much of the overall band grade with greater point values being assigned to performances.

Skills Development

Students will be routinely assessed on their ability to perform on their instrument/equipment. The assessment will be assigned a numerical grade determined by an evaluation rubric.

General Department Policies

The following are many of our general department policies.

1. The band curriculum is sequential in nature taking place over the course of the entire academic year. The curriculum is not divided into sections or semesters; therefore, a full yearlong participation in band is required of each student unless an exception is made by the Director of Bands.
2. Jazz Band Students must be concurrently enrolled in first- or second-hour band. Infrequently specialty instruments such as piano and/or guitar students may be exempt from the concurrent enrollment requirement as permitted by the Director and Assistant Director of Bands.
3. The Instrumental Music Curriculum is a six-year process (grades 7-12), therefore any student who chooses to “un-enroll” in band at any point during grades 7-12 is not eligible to re-enroll in band unless an exception is made by the Director of Bands. Furthermore, colorguard skill development as well as the overall morale and continuity of the colorguard section are best maintained through all guard students’ continuous enrollment in band, therefore guard students who choose to un-enroll in band after a semester or more of enrollment are NOT eligible to re-enroll in band unless an exception is made by the Director of Bands.
4. Performances and rehearsals are often scheduled outside of the regular school day to ensure the proper education of each student. Rehearsal times and performances will be made available to students well in advance of each event. Attendance grades will often be earned during these events. Students who do not attend these regularly scheduled events may be removed from the performance ensemble at the discretion of the Director and/or Assistant Director of Bands.
5. Southmoore performances are expected to be of the highest quality. Students are therefore required to prepare to achieve excellence in all endeavors. Any actions that detract from this spirit of excellence may result in appropriate consequences.
6. Participation in a high-quality program such as the Southmoore Band is a privilege. Our students carry a responsibility to themselves, their team, their parents, and their school to set the highest possible examples of conduct both while participating in band functions and outside of these band functions. Therefore, students are expected to maintain an environment conducive to quality learning and exceptional music making. Southmoore Band Students are further expected to maintain behavior above and beyond the discipline policies outlined in the Moore Public Schools High School Student Handbook. The Director of Bands is charged to uphold these standards and therefore may remove any student from the program at any time and for any reason.
7. Awards for excellence will be given at the discretion of the band staff at the appropriate times. Students may earn a band letter upon the completion of predetermined requirements as decided upon by the Director of Bands and listed on the letter application found at southmooreband.com. The Director of Bands will determine which graduating seniors will be eligible to wear the pink cord during commencement ceremonies. One graduating student, as chosen by the Director of Bands, will have the honor of wearing the pink stole during commencement ceremonies.

Band Fees

It costs money to run a band department, especially a band program such as Southmoore in which students are offered a wealth of opportunities. Generally, the school district provides approximately 5%-10% of the funds needed to cover the yearly operating expenditures; therefore, each student must pay a general band fee and help fundraise to the band account. 2023-24 Band Fee information is available at southmooreband.com.

The Southmoore Instrumental Arts Department seeks to help families eliminate out of pocket costs associated with High School Band, therefore a multitude of fundraisers are offered. It is important to note that students are expected to either pay the fees, or actively participate in fundraisers. Students may also participate in some fundraisers and pay the

remaining balance. It is essential to keep up with the payment schedule as we must pay trip related deposits and other cost immediately.

Communication directly to Mr. Mewhorter concerning financial issues is imperative. Mr. Mewhorter will work with families concerning finances; however active student participation in fundraising is critical.

Most expenses take place during the fall semester and are related to marching band expenses. Therefore, any student still enrolled in band on or after September 1, 2023, are responsible for all fees unless reasonable exceptions are made by the Director of Bands. Due to bookkeeping responsibilities and our status as a 501©3 tax exempt organization – refunds from the band account are not available. See the band fee information sheet for more details.

School District Provided Equipment

The Southmoore Instrumental Band Department will provide a great deal of often-expensive equipment to provide the finest music education available. Students are expected to properly care for and maintain all equipment assigned to their care. Students will be required to pay for any repairs required while the equipment is in their care. Additionally, students must pay a \$50 fee as determined to offset the costs of maintaining the instrument. Students are not touch any equipment that is assigned to another student.

Performance Attire

Performances are a special occasion and are the culmination of a great amount of preparation time and effort. The student's attire is expected to help illustrate and emphasize this fact.

For most outdoor performances, the band uniform with performance top will be worn. Students are expected to wear the uniform with a great deal of respect and should always be worn correctly. Conduct while in uniform must be first-class.

The band staff will provide detailed information regarding the attire to be worn for other performances. A great effort will be made to keep costs to a minimum.

Information Disbursement

Due to the number of individuals and activities associated with the instrumental arts department, it is imperative that students and stakeholders assume the personal responsibility to remain up to date concerning upcoming events. The following methods will be used to disburse information:

- Mr. Mewhorter utilizes the “band” app for real time notifications. Additional notification services are maintained by the band parent's organization, the percussion staff and the colorguard director. This provides a safe and effective means to distribute that more pressing information. See southmooreband.com for instructions to enroll in this service.
- Mr. Mewhorter will push out regular “band bulletins” full of information regarding current band events. It is the responsibility of stakeholders, parents, and students to review these documents. These handouts will be made available for download at southmooreband.com, posted on our social media accounts, and sent out electronically through our “band” app service.
- The band website, southmooreband.com, is another means to inform band patrons. It is recommended that individuals check this website first when trying to collect current information and make a habit of regularly checking the page for updates.
- The band maintains several social media accounts. See southmooreband.com for listings.

Conclusion

The Southmoore Instrumental Music Department staff will address any questions regarding department policy or any other items. We recognize that participation in the program is a commitment; however, membership is well worth the time and financial investment and will often become the highlight of our student's high school experience. Thank you for your investment in the arts and music education.