

# Northvale Band Handbook

2009 - 10

## Band Basics

These are the 5 ingredients needed to have a fun and successful band experience:

1. An instrument in perfect working order.
2. The Band Home Page: <http://fcserver.nvnet.org/~herndon> added to your favorites or bookmarks, and checked each week before your first band class. (Can also be found at [www.northvaleschools.org](http://www.northvaleschools.org))
3. On time attendance of class lessons, band practices, and performances.
4. At home practice of the things you've learned in lessons and band.
5. Long term patience, respect, and commitment to the band, its members, and yourself.

## Be On Time

- At morning rehearsals, we begin playing at 8:00 AM!
- Arrive by 7:50 AM, to be sure you are ready to play on time.
- Afternoon practices for Concert Band will begin at 3:05 PM and last until 3:40 PM.
- Arriving late too many times can lower your grade in band.

**\*\*\* Read the grading chart on the next page for details. \*\*\***

## Your Grade in Band

- **Too many excused or unexcused absences will lower your grade in band, and may cause you to be removed from band.**
- **Days when you are officially absent from school do not count as an absence from band.**

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**The chart on the next page (and the definitions below), based on your attendance and your Band Skill Rating, will be used to calculate your grade in band. See *Understanding Your Band Skill Rating*, and your *Band Skill Rating Chart*, which you are required to keep in your band folder.**

# Your Grade In Band

| Grade     | Attendance  | and        | Skill Level   |
|-----------|---|------------|---|
| <b>A+</b> | Superior attendance                                   | <i>and</i> | Superior band skills <i>or</i><br>Excellent band skills |
|           | <b>OR</b>   |            |   |
| <b>A</b>  | Excellent attendance                                  | <i>and</i> | Superior band skills                                    |
|           | Superior attendance                                   | <i>and</i> | Good band skills  |
|           | <b>OR</b>   |            |   |
| <b>A-</b> | Excellent attendance                                  | <i>and</i> | Excellent band skills <i>or</i><br>Good band skills     |
|           | <b>OR</b>   |            |   |
|           | Good attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Superior band skills                                    |
| <b>B+</b> | Good attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Good band skills <i>or</i><br>Excellent band skills     |
|           | <b>OR</b>   |            |   |
| <b>B</b>  | Poor attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Superior band skills                                    |
|           | Superior attendance <i>or</i><br>Excellent attendance | <i>and</i> | Weak band skills  |
| <b>B-</b> | <b>OR</b>   |            |   |
|           | Poor attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Excellent band skills                                   |
| <b>C</b>  | Good attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Weak band skills  |
|           | Poor attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Good band skills  |
|           | Poor attendance                                       | <i>and</i> | Weak band skills  |

## Definition of Terms

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Superior Attendance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late fewer than 5 times</li> <li>• No unexcused absences</li> <li>• 3 or fewer excused absences</li> </ul> <p><b>Excellent Attendance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late fewer than 5 times</li> <li>• No unexcused absences</li> <li>• 5 or fewer excused absences</li> </ul> <p><b>Good Attendance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late fewer than 5 times</li> <li>• 3 or fewer unexcused absences</li> <li>• Total excused and unexcused absence must be less than 6</li> </ul> <p><b>Poor Attendance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Late more than 5 times</li> <li>• More than 3 unexcused absences</li> <li>• 7 or more total excused and unexcused absences</li> </ul> <p><b>Days when you are officially absent from school <u>do not</u> count as an absence from band.</b></p> | <p><b>Superior Band Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Among the most highly skilled players in your band</li> </ul> <p><b>Excellent Band Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band Skill Rating above the skill target for your band</li> <li>• <u>Wind Ensemble members:</u> A Band Skill Rating of 90 or higher</li> </ul> <p><b>Good Band Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band Skill Rating within the skill targets for your band</li> <li>• <u>Wind Ensemble members:</u> A Band Skill Rating of 85 -89</li> </ul> <p><b>Weak Band Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band Skill Rating below the skill targets for your band</li> </ul> |
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# Home Practice

All band members are expected to practice regularly, and make noticeable progress on their instruments. Some students can make great progress with very little practice, while others may have to work twice as hard to get half the results. Most of us are somewhere in between these two extremes.

**General guideline for success of the average student: 4 or 5 practice sessions per week, with each session lasting 20-30 minutes.**

## *Practice Tips*

- 1. Try to practice at the same time every day.** Most students find that right after school is the best time to practice. If you wait until all your homework is done, you won't feel like practicing. If you practice first, you will feel ready to study afterwards and get all of your work done on time.
- 2. Keep your mind on the sound of the music at all times.**
- 3. Use the “*Band Skill Rating Chart*”** (included in this package) and the tips on the back of the chart to guide your practice.
- 4. Try and recreate your band lesson at home.** Do the same music, in the same order, and have your mind on the same concepts you were practicing during your lesson.
- 5. Slow it down.** Even if it's a very fast part, ultra slow practice is the key to learning to play fast. Often, just a few days of slow practice will make an “impossible” piece of music seem pretty easy.
- 6. Break it up.** If you're having problems at a certain point in the music, don't go all the way back to the beginning, and don't pass over the trouble spot. Instead, start one or two notes before the mistake, and practice a very small phrase. It may be only two notes long. **Slow it down.** Practice the small piece until you get some improvement. Take short breaks. When you can play the small piece, add a note or two before or after the phrase. If the problem comes back, go back to the original piece. A few days of this kind of practice will solve the problem.

# **Band Awards**

The following awards may be earned in band:

## ***Band Excellence***

Awarded to the 2 most deserving 8th grade band members at Graduation.

## ***Director's Awards***

Awarded to 7th and 8th grade musicians who are the "leaders of the best players".

These awards are presented at the Awards Day Assembly.

**Along with outstanding playing skills, attendance, leadership, and attitude are extremely important considerations in all awards. Award winners should be cheerful, enthusiastic, dedicated, and dependable.**