

# **BAND SYLLABUS**

## **Grades 6-8**

### **WELCOME**

Hello, and welcome to FAMS Band This syllabus contains the grading policy, how to order supplies, and many other important items for band students and parents. There will be email communication throughout the year to keep you informed about events as well as what's going on in the classroom.

### **GOOGLE CLASSROOM**

You have been (or will be) given access to your child's [Google Classroom](#). Classroom is the portal for virtually all content and resources related to band, including, but not limited to: announcements, assignment links, resources for practicing, this syllabus, and much, much more.

### **GRADING**

The band grade is comprised of three parts, each explained below, and weighed as follows:

- 1) Ensemble Assessments = 50%
- 2) Summative Concert Assessments = 30%
- 3) Assignments = 20%

#### **Ensemble Assessments:**

Also referred to as *Rehearsal Musicianship*, Ensemble Assessment is the work students do each day in class: punctuality, responsibility, engagement, attitude and effort. An example of how to earn points toward this grade is remembering to bring your instrument and folder to class.

#### **Summative Concert Assessments:**

After each concert, students will use a [rubric](#) to grade themselves based on the following criteria:

- Preparation (rehearsals for the concert)
- Professionalism (punctuality, materials)
- Etiquette (presence & behavior on stage)
- Performance

The concert attendance policy is found later in this document.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

There will be a number of playing and non-playing assignments each quarter. Playing assignments are completed using the online platform MusicFirst; students will use a device to submit a recording. The program “listens” and gives students immediate feedback including a score.

These short playing assignments are designed to be enjoyable with a focus on practicing and improvement. In fact, a student’s overall band grade will not be negatively impacted by playing assignments as long as they are completed with an honest effort. Students may complete them at home, or at school as time allows (before and after school, lunch, study hall, etc.)

Playing assignments through MusicFirst will be graded as shown below. Students will have unlimited playing attempts, and may redo assignments.

85-100% = 4 (advanced)

70-84% = 3 (proficient)

50-69% = 2 (basic)

0-49% = 1 (minimal)

## **DAILY IN BAND**

Learning to play an instrument and perform in a group with others is fun and rewarding. Musicianship will develop lifelong skills such as confidence, leadership, organization, and collaboration to name but a few. When a FAMS band student exhibits good musicianship in band, it all starts when he or she enters the room:

1. Look at the board for the day’s agenda.
2. Get your folder & instrument.
3. Go to your seat.
4. Warm up.

A student’s “Ensemble Assessments” grade will reflect their active and positive contribution to the group rehearsal.

## **CONCERT POLICY**

Concert attendance is required and worth 30% of the quarterly grade (see Summative Concert Assessments). A missing grade (absent from concert) can be made up for two reasons:

- 1) Student is absent from school that day due to illness, or
- 2) An unforeseen emergency, handled on a case-by-case basis. Conflicts with other activities do not constitute an emergency.

### **Concert Attire**

- Black pants
- Black shoes (athletic shoes are fine)
- White shirt with a collar polo or dress shirt

## **REQUIRED PERFORMANCES**

There are five required events for 6th graders, six for 7th graders, and seven for 8th graders :

- Fall Concert - (NOT 6th grade) - Tuesday, Oct. 26
- Winter Concert - Monday, Dec. 21
- Pops Concert - Sunday, Feb. 20
- Performing Arts Festival - Saturday, April 2
- Spring Concert - Tuesday, May 23
- [Beyond the Notes Music Festival](#) at the Kalahari Waterpark in WI Dells (8th grade only)

The full Band Calendar is available on the last page of this document and on the FAMS website by clicking [here](#).

## **PRACTICING**

Practice is essential for all musicians. While not an *explicit* grade-book item, practicing is *implicit* in the graded playing assignments and our preparation for concerts.

REHEARSAL IS NOT PRACTICE. All band students are expected to practice their instrument outside of class. The focus of band class (rehearsal) is musical concepts and ensemble skills (playing with a group). This is not the same as practicing your instrument.

### **WHEN & WHERE?**

It's important to set aside a consistent time and place to practice. Whether it's right after school, right after your homework, before you play video games...whatever works best for you. Some students can make a legitimate claim that practicing at home is difficult or impossible. For this reason, students may take advantage of numerous opportunities to practice at school. We have great facilities, including a number of Practice Rooms. Students may use these rooms during homeroom, study hall, lunch, and before and after school.

### **HOW MUCH?**

100 minutes is a good weekly goal. If you practice five days a week at least twenty minutes each time, you've reached 100 minutes for the week. Twenty minutes of smart practice is better than three hours of poor practice. Work on the stuff you can't play, and always play things slowly at first. For many of you, tracking the amount of practice time can be a good motivator and help you stay organized. However, don't get hung up on the minutes. The point is that you and your instrument are not strangers.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR**

### **JAZZ ENSEMBLE**

Every year prior to COVID, FAMS had an 8th grade jazz ensemble (Jazz 1) and a 7th grade jazz ensemble (Jazz 2). There will be at least one jazz ensemble this year. Information will be sent home during the first week of school. In addition to the Midwinter Jazz concert in January, FAMS jazz ensembles perform annually at the Eau Claire Jazz Festival in April (overnight trip), and possibly one additional jazz festival (day trip). These trips are to be determined, and will be communicated in advance.

### **SHOW CHOIR COMBO**

The opportunity to play in a small rock band that accompanies the traveling Show Choir is reserved for 8th graders, although 7th graders have participated in the past as space warrants. Information about the cost, schedule and how to sign up will be sent home at the start of the school year.

## **SUPPLIES**

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to order equipment and supplies such as valve oil and reeds. While you are free to shop anywhere (Amazon, etc.), Breber Music from Elkhorn travels to our school every Thursday morning. Orders can be placed using the information listed below under “repairs”.

Students will get recommendations for reeds and other supplies on an individual basis. Please ask. If you are reading this and need reeds in a pinch, saxes and clarinets - go with Rico strength #3.

## **REPAIRS**

Repair forms must first be filled out and are available in the band room or on Geo Breber’s website. We’ll send your instrument in on a Thursday and it will usually come back in one week. Breber will provide a loaner while your instrument is in the shop.

GEO BREBER MUSIC, INC.  
1-800-686-8737  
Website: [geobreber.com](http://geobreber.com)  
Email: [orders@brebermusic.net](mailto:orders@brebermusic.net)

## **PERCUSSION**

All FAMS percussionists must own the items listed below during their time at FAMS. A percussionist will accumulate items in their stick bag as they advance through school. Each student's bag may vary depending on their level of dedication and interest. However, the list below is the minimum requirement. The first two items were obtained in 5th grade band.

- 1) 1 pair of drum sticks (*obtained in 5th grade*)
- 2) 1 pair of hard mallets (*obtained in 5th grade*)
- 3) 1 pair of yarn mallets
- 4) 1 stick bag

Geo Breber has predetermined brands/models of the following items for our school and will give you pricing details. Please call or email to order whatever you may need from the above list. Items will be delivered to school.

We rented a percussion kit...now what? While we have no requirement that you continue renting the kit, you have made it about half way to ownership through your payments. It is necessary that percussionists have a means to practice at home (a drum pad and a bell set)..

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Band students will enjoy at least one field trip in their three years at FAMS.

This year 6th graders will join 5th grade band students in a trip to hear the UW Madison Varsity Band on Feb. 18th.

The 8th grade band performs every year at the Beyond The Notes Music Festival at the Kalahari Waterpark and Resort in late May.

As noted earlier, the 7th & 8th grade Jazz Ensemble and the Show Choir Combo travel to numerous events.

# 2021-2022 BAND CALENDAR

- Concerts are in the high school auditorium unless noted otherwise.
- Green rows are required of all band students grade 6-8.
- Other events may be required depending on grade level and extracurricular participation.
- Show Choir Combo schedule is not included here.

9/13/2021	Band Booster Meeting	Parents / FAHS Music Pod	6:30 PM
10/26/2021	FAMS Band Fall Concert	7th & 8th Grade Band	7:00 PM
11/1/2021	Band Booster Meeting	Parents / FAHS Music Pod	6:30 PM
11/6/2021	Pancake Breakfast	Jazz Bands Performs	6:00 AM
12/21/2021	FAMS Band Winter Concert	6th, 7th, 8th Grade Band	7:00 PM
1/12/2022	Band Booster Meeting	Parents / FAHS Music Pod	6:30 PM
1/24/2022	Mid-Winter Jazz Concert	Jazz Concert	7:00 PM
2/18/2022	UW Varsity Band Concert	5th/6th Grade Band	Field Trip
2/20/2022	Pops Concert	5-12 Band Concert in Gym	2:00 PM
3/9/2022	Band Booster Meeting	Parents / FAHS Music Pod	6:30 PM
4/2/2022	Performing Arts Festival	6-12 Band	All Day (as scheduled)
4/22/2022	Eau Claire Jazz Festival	Eau Claire Jazz Fest	Overnight Trip
4/29/2022	Exemplary Honors Recital	Top student musicians from the PAF	7:00 PM
5/23/2022	Spring Band Concert	6-8 Band Concert	7:00 PM
5/27/2022	Beyond the Notes Festival	8th Grade Band	Field Trip
6/1/2022	Band Booster Meeting	Parents / FAHS Music Pod	6:30 PM