

Parent and Student Band Handbook



**GREATER
SASKATOON
CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS**

Parent and Student Band Handbook

Throughout human history music has always had the power to move us deeply. In our Catholic tradition music has the power to connect us with God. Music strengthens our spiritual experience by entering our hearts and feeding our souls. When we create and perform music, God works through us to be his instrument in ministering to others. St. Paul says, "Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs; sing to God with thanksgiving in your hearts." (Colossians 3:16b)

Band Program:

1) Definition of Band

a. Purpose

- Band is a means to introduce and develop the art of music through group instrumental instruction using Band designated instruments which include Woodwind, Brass and Percussion.

b. Locally Developed Option

- Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools' Band program is a locally determined 7 year music option for grades 6-12.
- Although Band is not a mandatory means to experience music instruction it is strongly encouraged that all students enter Band in their grade 6 year to get the full benefit of the grade 6–8 Band program. Entering after grade 6 is at the discretion of the Band teacher.

c. Instruments

- Concert Band instrumentation consists of Woodwind, Brass and Percussion instruments:
 1. Woodwinds- Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, Bassoon.
 2. Brass- Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone/ Euphonium, Tuba.

3. Percussion- Mallets (Bells), Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Auxiliary Percussion.

d. Benefits of Band

- Provides a broader educational experience.
- Provides lifelong skills.
- Helps develop:
 1. Leadership skills
 2. Teamwork
 3. Effective communication skills through aural and non-aural means
 4. Creativity, artistic, and emotional expression
 5. Open mindedness
 6. A sense of culture and heritage
 7. Unique friendships

2) Board Expectations

a. Minimum requirements

- Student will receive 2 – 45 minutes classes/week delivered by a Band teacher at each grade level.
- There may be extra-curricular performing opportunities at the discretion of the Band teacher.
- Instruction is based on the *Grade 6-9 Curriculum Support Document (1997)* provided by the Saskatchewan Band Association.
- Performances occur throughout the year based at the discretion of the Band teacher.



b. Band Assessment

- Band assessments are both formal and informal.
 1. Formal assessments may include playing tests, written tests, aural tests, and assignments.
 2. Informal assessments may include ongoing observation and feedback on performance participation, practice, behaviour and progress during class instruction and rehearsals. Informal assessment helps provide the direction for instruction to help improve student learning and skill development.

3) Responsibilities

a. The Parent

- Provide the instrument, Band instruction book, and other Band specific supplies.
- Show support and encouragement to your child through:
 1. Positive feedback.
 2. Encourage regular practice to occur in the home in a designated practice area (see Appendix for Helpful Hints for Practicing).
 3. Make sure Band instrument is in good working order and any repairs needed are done in a timely manner.
 4. If desired, provide private lessons to help students further develop their instrumental skills.
 5. Provide the Band uniform (see Appendix for Band Teacher Supply List).
 6. Commitment is for the entire school year.
 7. Participation of your child at all performances.
 8. Participation of your grade 6 Band student at the Beginner Band Workshop in the fall.

b. The Student

- Bring to each Band class the instrument, book and supplies.
- Practice regularly at home (see Appendix for Helpful Hints for Practicing).
- Commit to Band program for the entire school year.
- Attend all required performances, practices and Band events.
- Show respect and care of your instrument, other students' instruments and the band room equipment.
- Attend the beginner Band Workshop in the fall (for grade 6 Band students) or students learning a new instrument.

c. The Band Teacher

- Provide instruction as outlined in the *Grade 6-9 Curriculum Support Document (1997)* from the Saskatchewan Band Association.
- Provide a positive and respectful teaching and learning environment.
- Arrange for performance opportunities.
- Provide communication to parents about student progress and programming.

4) Instruments

- a. The recruiting process provides the determination of the appropriate instrument based on a set of instrument specific criteria with the goal of helping each student achieve success and enjoyment on the instrument.
- b. The School Board provides the following instruments for a yearly fee of \$120
- Tuba, baritone, euphonium, French horn, baritone saxophone, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet, bassoon, oboe, and piccolo.
 - Each school has a standard set of percussion equipment. Percussion students are expected to rent a bell/percussion kit to practice with at home.

c. The following instruments are expected to be obtained by the parents:

- Flutes, clarinets, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, bell/percussion kit (includes sticks and mallets).
- Families with financial challenges in obtaining an instrument should speak to their Band director.

d. Ways to obtain an instrument

- It is strongly recommended that all instruments are rented or purchased from a reputable, local Band music store. Instruments obtained from other sources may not be able to be repaired by Band repair technicians. Better quality instruments contribute to success in Band.

1. From a local Band music store:

- a. Long & McQuade, Musicraft and St. John's Music
- b. Options include rent, rent-to own or purchase an instrument.
- c. It is strongly recommended that an instrument is booked in June to guarantee it is available for the fall.

2. Purchasing a used instrument or using a family owned instrument:

- a. **Ensure the instrument is in good working condition.** Have the instrument checked by a reputable Band Repair Technician at one of the local Band music stores.
- b. Ensure the instrument is ready for use before the beginning of the upcoming school year.

e. Band Supplies

- Each Band teacher has a specific supply list for each Band instrument and for each grade.

1. Please see Appendix for Band Teacher Supply List for your specific school or visit the division Band website:
www.scs.sk.ca/arts.

5) Recruiting process

a. Band Information Sessions

- Band teachers will make initial contact in the spring with current **grade 5 students** through a Band presentation and/or informal demonstration concerts.
- **Parent Band information nights** are held on both the east and west side of the city. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend one of the information nights.
- Parent Band Information nights will provide a discussion and information on programming, acquiring an instrument, expectations, and any other relevant information relevant.

b. Instrument Tryouts

- All grade 5 students are able to try out the designated Band instruments available for grade 6 Band.
- Specific instrument assessments are applied to each instrument and students are evaluated on the potential to achieve success based on this criteria.
- Following the instrument tryouts, the Band teacher will discuss with each student the best instrument choice. The instrument choice is then shared with parents/guardians and is confirmed through the Band registration form.

c. Band Registration

- Registration forms are handed out at the end of the instrument recruiting process.
- Registration forms must be handed in to the Band teacher in June in order to be registered for grade 6 Band.

- You may receive a confirmation letter confirming registration and instrument choice.
- Upon receiving a completed Band registration form a Parent/Student Band Handbook will be given to each registered student.
- If you are renting from the division you will receive an invoice from your school at the beginning of the school year.
- Payment for school division instrument is due within 30 days of receiving invoice
- Cheques are to be made out to:
 - 1) Name of school or
 - 2) St. Paul's RCSSD #20 or
 - 3) Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division

d. Beginner Band Workshop

- There are two Beginner Band Workshops in September – one for west side schools and one for east side schools.
- This workshop is provided free of charge by the school division. Professional players are hired to provide specific instrument instruction in a small group setting.
- Attendance is required as this workshop provides the specific and initial technical foundations for playing each Band instrument. This is critical to the overall enjoyment and success the student will experience in Band.

6) Performance Expectations

- Band is a performing art and therefore attendance at all Band performances is required as part of the Band assessment.
- All Band performances require the Band uniform unless otherwise indicated by the Band director.

a. Band Concerts

- Each school will determine their Band performance schedules. Generally, there is a Band concert slated for December and one in late spring.
- Band concerts are determined by the Band teacher.
- Participation is required by all Band students.

b. Music Festivals

- Saskatoon Music Festival occurs each spring (March/April). Each Band director will determine their involvement in the local Music Festival.
- Student participation is required if the Music Festival performance option is chosen.

7) Extra-Curricular Performance Options

a. Band Trips

- Band trips are determined by each Band Director and are not an expectation of the school division.
- Information package including permission forms, health forms and itineraries will be distributed as needed.
- All Band trips must include performances which meet division guidelines.

b. After School Band

- Tuesdays are designated After School Band days by the school division to avoid conflicts with other after school activities.
- After School Band is open to all grade 7 and 8 Band students.
- After School Band plays different and often more challenging music than what is given to the Band classes.

- After School Band provides the students an opportunity to expand their musical skills and experiences and to meet students from other schools.
- More performance opportunities are available through After School Band concerts and Band trips.

For After School Bands to be offered there must be:

- 1) An expression of interest from the students and parents directed to the Band teacher of the school.
- 2) An available rehearsal facility in the area.
- 3) Band teachers from the area willing to support the extracurricular request.

Please check with the Band teachers in your area to see if there is an After School Band Program being offered at your school.

c. Small Group Ensembles

- Small group ensembles are options determined by each Band teacher and are based on student interest and needs.
- This may include Jazz Bands, wind ensemble, duets, trios, Pit Bands, Pep bands and other types of small ensembles.
- The Band teacher has the discretion to determine the criteria for participation.



Appendix – A

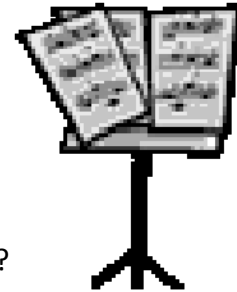
Helpful Hints for Practice

Practice Routine and Space

- ✎ Establish a regular practice time that fits your schedule
- ✎ Establish a quiet place to practice away from interruptions
- ✎ If possible, set up a permanent space with everything you need (music stand, chair, pencil, metronome, tuner, method book)

What to Practice

- ✎ Warm ups (including posture and breathing exercises)
- ✎ Scales and long tones
- ✎ Songs and exercises from the method book
- ✎ Band repertoire
- ✎ Playing familiar songs by ear
- ✎ Additional song or solo material



How to Practice

- ✎ A couple of shorter sessions are better than one long session
- ✎ Set goals for yourself – what do you want to accomplish today?
- ✎ Frequently listen to recordings of your instrument
- ✎ Frequently check your posture, breathing, embouchure, hand/instrument position
- ✎ Ask your parents to listen and observe your practice session

Take Care of Your Instrument

- ✎ Obtain all necessary instrument maintenance supplies
- ✎ Never leave your instrument lying around – keep it in the case
- ✎ Do not keep music and method books in your instrument case
- ✎ Clean brass instruments with warm water and soap about once a month; use a brass mouthpiece brush once a week
- ✎ Swab out woodwind instruments after EVERY use
- ✎ Return reeds to reed case, do not leave on the mouthpiece



Appendix B

June 2014

Dear Parents,

Re: Annual Band Rental Fees

This is to inform you that there will be an annual Band rental fee charged on instruments borrowed from the school division. The annual fee is currently set at \$120.00. The fee is charged to offset the cost of maintenance and repair of the instruments. If payment is made by cheque, the cheque should be made out to either: 1) The name of the school; 2) St. Paul RCSSD # 20; or 3) Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division.

You will receive an invoice from your home school at registration time. All fees are paid directly to the school. Receipt of payment is due no later than September 30, unless otherwise arranged with the school administration.

Please speak to your school administration or Band teacher if you have any questions regarding the annual Band rental fee.

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools
Arts Education – Band Program