

# Melrose

## High School Band Handbook

2012 - 2013



Mr. Matthew Repucci, Director

Dear Band Members and Families,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I have been looking forward to this fall for many months now and am excited to see what the year has in store for us!

For the past six years I have been directing/teaching a middle school and elementary program (grades 3 - 8) which included 7 Catholic Schools in Northeastern Massachusetts. I have also been a private teacher at Masconomet Regional High School (my alma mater - class of '98) and have worked with various high school level groups/students as a freelance coach. So while I have worked with high school students in the past I am excited to finally be teaching high school full time. I hope that we will have a great year together and look forward to working with you all and carrying on the great tradition that Mr. Buckley has left for us.

As a musician I have been studying music for over 20 years and have been lucky to have some very fine teachers at points along the way. My hope is that I can give you the same insight, enthusiasm, and knowledge that they gave to me. I love to teach and I hope that that comes across in our time together. My main purpose is to help you see and reach your potential on whatever path you have chosen in music. I look forward to seeing you all in class.

- Mr. Repucci

## **GOALS**

Melrose High School Band students will continue skill development in the fundamentals of music at the high school level: Rhythm and Meter, Tone, Articulation, Blend and Balance, Melody and Harmony, Reading, Creativity and Interpretation, Ensemble Playing, Scales and Arpeggios, Playing Varied Styles, Organizing Practice Time, Goal Setting and Achieving, and Standard Performance skills.

Emphasis will be placed primarily on attitude and work ethic. Consistent practice on the fundamentals of music on a daily basis can and will translate to excellent playing at the high school level.

Students will learn and implement a variety study/practice skills to enable them to present outstanding performances of a wide variety of literature.

## **CLASS MATERIALS**

- Instrument (complete with mouthpiece, neck strap, reeds, etc.)
- Pencil
- Notebook to keep with music
- Folder with Music
- Oils, Extra Reeds, etc. as applicable
- An outstanding attitude...

## **MATERIALS TO HAVE AT HOME**

- Instrument...
- Music Stand
- An established practice area
- Metronome
- Practice Notebook
- Device for listening to music (examples: CD player, iPod, Computer)
- A bag of tricks for when you don't feel like practicing..

## **GRADING**

- 1) Class participation and preparation: 80%
- 2) Individual Playing/Improvement: 20%
- 3) Concert Attendance – Mandatory (-25% for unexcused absence)

## **CLASS PARTICIPATION AND PREPARATION**

Attendance and 'Being on Time' are two pillars of the participation portion of your grade. All students are expected to be in class/rehearsal on time every day of the school year. If rehearsal or class starts at "X:00", then students should plan on arriving at least 5 - 10 minutes prior so that they have time to get their materials ready (and socialize) before the downbeat at "X:00".

(Excessive tardiness will result in lowered grade at my discretion. I will determine an exact ratio of number of times late/grade lowered once the year gets underway. I have heard about students coming in at 8:00, unfortunately those days are over. You have been informed)

All students are expected to participate at all times. Your level of participation will be readily apparent to me by your level of attentiveness, effort in preparing and playing your part, and your overall positive demeanor in rehearsal. For the one time you happen to forget your instrument you will still actively, mentally "play" along with the group and do any "non-playing" exercises that I designate to stay engaged with what we are doing.

I expect respectful, mature behavior in class. Anything less will soon lead to a lower grade.

As we get to know one another you will know what I expect and whether you are doing it or not. It is your job to pay attention and follow through. I will always give students specific action points which are manageable and tailored for them. If I ask for a section to be practiced, I will specify exactly how it should be practiced and what I expect to hear after practicing it. Assignments are designed to make you better one step at a time; which is why your grade is really dependent on your worth ethic and execution of those assignments. Talent is a very, very small piece of the puzzle at our level. What it really takes is consistent effort towards steady improvement. This is the reason for Participation and Preparation being so vital.

## **REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS**

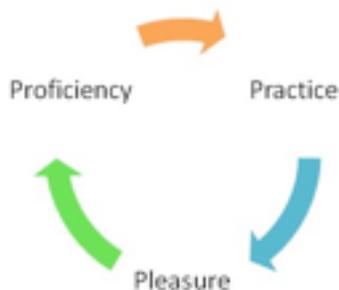
- You are in your seat with your instrument, music, and pencil, ready to play, at least 2 minutes before the start of class. (I should be able to say "go" for the C-scale warm up at 1 minute before the actual start of class.)
- You are quiet and attentive when appropriate.
- All playing stops immediately when I cut the group off.
- If you have a comment or question, please raise your hand; unless of course it is appropriate at that moment to just ask your question out loud. You are smart enough to be able to discern between the two.
- Eating food before or while you are playing will destroy your instrument slowly over time... Act accordingly.
- Gum will remain outside the band room walls at all times.
- You will play only your own instrument.
- Everyone will actively contribute to keeping the band room clean and organized at all times throughout the entire year.
- You are expected to take initiative.
- You are expected to enjoy band, you have chosen to be here...!
- You are expected behave in a mature manner.



**- All members of the band are expected to practice on their own -**

Practice is about **quality** not quantity. But... you can't achieve quality without a certain amount of punching the clock either. In order to maintain skills and continue developing at the rate I expect, you should be blocking off 20 - 30 minutes a day/night, working on personal skill development - breathing, long tones, scales and arpeggio's, tonguing, rhythm, rudiments, etudes, district solos, etc. - and specific difficult sections of the band music. More serious students (definitely those with the intent of auditioning for Districts and All-State) should be putting in from 45 - 90 minutes a night. These are rough barometers to use as starting points.

Often the biggest obstacle to practicing is simply not having a game plan. That fleeting moment when you think "what should I do?" is often all that stands between a productive practice session and a wasted day. Especially when you have a very busy schedule and little time to fit it in; a simple plan can be the major key to getting your practice done. By having a set practice routine to start each session with, it will be much easier to get to work each night. It can actually come to be a relief from other homework - a personal time. When this is understood and done right it can actually have quite a calming affect. Anyone who is unsure of exactly what to practice should come see me and we will lay out a practice plan for you to start on. You must plan and schedule your practice to be consistently successful. I don't believe in "telling you to practice". I believe in teaching you how to practice, and expect you to follow through.



We will discuss practice strategies at length scattered throughout most every rehearsal (you should write these down in your notebook).

I will teach you any practice technique necessary to help you succeed, from time management strategies, skill development and maintenance, self-motivation tricks, overcoming technical difficulties, learning difficult passages, to preparing for Districts and All-State festivals and college auditions. Ask for help...

**\*\*All Seniors** graduating from the Melrose High School Band program should be able to play the All-State Scale requirements from memory (with some range considerations). By the end of

Sophomore year all students should be able to play the Senior District Scale requirements from memory. Practicing scales is like brushing your teeth: You do it everyday...

## **CONCERT ATTENDANCE**

Attendance. At. All. Band. Concerts. is. Mandatory.

## **SEATING**

It is important to have leaders not only in the front of the section, but also in all parts of the section for a balanced sound. Seating must be arranged not only for the good of each individual, but also for the benefit of the entire ensemble. As I get to know the band I will determine the best way to determine seating in the future. For now we will continue with the way Mr. Buckley has set up the band

## **INSTRUMENT USE AND CARE**

**- Each student is expected to own/rent and maintain his/her own instrument. -**

Keep your instrument safe, and in working order by following these basic rules:

- Only play your instrument
- Keep the inside and outside of your mouth clean when playing your instrument.
- Keep it oiled [if applicable]
- Wipe it down/swab it out after use [if applicable]
- Keep percussion stored in an orderly and visually impressive manner
- Use Common Sense (Example: Place it back in the case rather than lying it on the floor)
- Treat your instrument like it is worth many hundred or even thousands of dollars.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

Private lessons are not required, but are **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**. They are a great opportunity for you to receive more in-depth/personalized instruction and give you the chance to move at your own pace. This kind individualized attention is extremely valuable. If you are interested in taking private lessons, please contact me for more information.

*“One of the fundamental drives of music is the mentor/mentor-tee relationship”*

## **CONTACT**

Please feel free to contact me with any questions throughout the year. The easiest way to reach me will be through e-mail, at [MRepucci@melrose.mec.edu](mailto:MRepucci@melrose.mec.edu) I am excited for a great school year, and I hope you are as well.

Sincerely,

Matthew Repucci

Thank you for reading this year’s band handbook. Students must return their signed commitment form by **Friday, August 31st**.



## **Commitment Form**

My parent and I have read and discussed the Melrose High School Band Handbook. We understand that concert attendance is required and agree to follow the rules and expectations of the Melrose High School Band Program.

Student Name (Printed neatly) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_