

Chassell Band Handbook

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Chassell Band Philosophy

The Chassell Band provides each student with the opportunity to become part of a caring community where students will grow individually and in solidarity through the enjoyable experience of music. Each student will face exciting challenges to help them develop their skills as a musician and prepare them for college.

My primary goal for the Chassell Band is to develop a program with a strong core, fostering a band where students feel pride, joy and a sense of belonging. The best way to accomplish this goal is to provide high expectations in a welcoming and an open learning environment. As students learn and become more successful, they will strive for greater challenges which will aid in creating an exemplary program.

Experience is the best way for the students to learn music. Therefore, I will act as a mentor, guiding their progress through a combination of exploration and repetition. As a mentor, I care about their success, not only in band but as developing young adults. I encourage students to be reflective and understanding of their actions, the impacts of their decisions, and how those decisions will affect the future.

Elementary Band

In the first two years of band, students will develop fundamental musical skills. These skills will require a conscious effort during band and when practicing at home.

The fundamental skills that we aspire to develop are:

1. Core rhythms and notes
2. Correct posture
3. Articulation (Tonguing)
4. Musical notation
5. Instrument care
6. Intonation and tuning
7. Scales

These core concepts are necessary for every musician to be successful. Chassell Band students will accomplish these goals with perseverance, patience and **good practice habits.**

Expectations

During class, students are expected to be prepared for class, be engaged in classroom instruction, treat others with respect in both words and behavior, and put forward their best effort. At home, students are expected to follow the practice guidelines, and complete their written and playing assignments allowing them to fully participate during class and support their fellow band members.

Classroom Schedule

There are two elementary bands, one with the 4th grade students, and another with the 5th grade students. The elementary band classes will meet regularly in 40 minute sessions in the afternoon. The specific schedule for each class will be announced at the beginning of the school year. *The 4th grade band starts during the second semester!

Performances

The students are expected to participate in the Christmas and Spring band concert. (4th grade only at the Spring Concert) Both the elementary and high school bands will participate. It is important that the elementary students attend the entire concert to observe the older students' performance so they observe their future band and build internal motivation.

As a band member, students are provided with additional opportunities, Every year, The Chassell Elementary Band attends and performs at a band clinic held during school hours. Students are expected to attend this particular field trip. The clinic helps the band develop as an ensemble.

Optional activities will be announced for the band throughout the year, including field trips to performances, workshops and many more.

High School Band

As students progress, they enter into the junior/senior band and begin to master the fundamentals and creative aspects of music. These skills are developed with correct repetition, reflection and internal motivation. Every student who participates in the high school band must be willing and able to play at a level appropriate for this band.

The fundamental skills that we aspire to develop are:

1. Extended ranges
2. Advanced rhythms
3. Key signatures
4. Independent playing ability
5. Expression
6. Listening skills
7. Tone quality
8. Leadership

These advanced concepts will help each student become strong musicians and build a strong program your child will want to be a part of.

Expectations

Chassell Band can only be an accomplished program if each student takes personal responsibility for themselves and their section. As peers and leaders, band students are expected to support each other and help each other by offering constructive criticism and holding up their peers to the Chassell Bands high standard. At home, students are expected to follow the practice guidelines, and complete any given assignments allowing them to fully participate during class and support their fellow band members.

Classroom Schedule

The Junior/Senior band meets 5 days a week during fourth hour for 50 minutes.

Performances

The students are expected to participate in the Christmas and Spring band concert. In addition, the high school pep band performs at selected basketball games, the Chassell Strawberry Parade and festival. These performances are required for every student, and students are expected to schedule work and other activities so that they do not conflict.

Additional performances and optional activities will be announced for the band through the year.

Elementary Band Policies and Procedures

Grading Policy

Grading will be based on the following criteria:

- Practice sheets
- Playing Tests
- Worksheets
- Performances
- Additional Assignments TBA

A completed practice sheet, including a parent signature is required at the beginning of each week as well as the assigned worksheet. Tests will be played biweekly. For each student to smoothly reach their maximum potential, a well established practice routine is required.

Point System

- Weekly Points.....10 points a day.
- Weekly Practice:200 Points

Student Grade	Required time
4th grade	1.5 hours- spread over the week
5th grade	1.5 hours, spread over a week

- Students may practice longer than the required time and received up to 100 bonus points per week.
- Practice time.....25/week
- Worksheets25-50 points
- Performances.....500 points

Discipline Policy

It is necessary for each student to be responsible for their own actions. In Chassell Elementary Band, students who choose not to follow classroom guidelines will be held accountable for their actions. This will result in a consequence appropriate to the severity of the offense.

- Given a verbal warning
- Given a warning slip describing the infraction, which the student signs
- Contact parent and form an action plan
- Discipline Referral- removal from classroom until a parent teacher conference is held.

Attendance Policy

Daily Attendance

The Chassell Township school attendance policy will be followed. This policy is explained in depth in the CTS handbook

Performance Attendance

Music is a performing art. One of the most important aspects of being in a musical ensemble, such as band, is the performance- the culmination of the student's efforts.

For the 4th and 5th graders, attendance at the Christmas Concert and the Spring Concert are required. Absence in the case of an emergency or situations approved with **advance notice** by the director will be excused. An unexcused absence from a concert will result in a **loss of one full letter grade or 500 points, whichever is greater**. The director has the option of excluding a student from attending a concert due to a lack of participation or gross misconduct.

High School Band Policies and Procedures

Grading Policy

Grading will be based on the following criteria:

- Quizzes
- Playing Tests
- Performances
- Additional Assignments TBA
- Rhythm Sheets/Worksheets

Point System

- Students may practice longer than the required time and received up to 50 bonus points per week.
- Playing test..... 100 points
- Worksheets25-50 points
- Performances.....500 points

Attendance

Attendance to all scheduled events is crucial. The group's morale suffers when a student is either late to or absent from rehearsals or performances. Your child's participation in the group mandates their attendance at the required events. Please plan vacations and weekends away so that each student will be able to fulfill their responsibility to the group.

Performance Attendance

Students are required to dress well or wear proper performance uniforms depending on the occasion. Please have these uniforms clean and pressed for every performance.

Concerts:

Uniform will be "Concert Black". *See clarification at bottom of the page* This uniform will be used for all concerts unless otherwise specified.

Performances such as the Strawberry Parade will allow for the use of the marching uniforms.

Pep Band uniform (See below)

Chassell shirt.

Rehearsal Procedures

Please be to rehearsals on time. Immediately begin to set your area and warm up. Each folder should contain the following:

1. Fingering Chart
2. Current Rhythm Sheet
3. Undamaged Music
4. Warm up material
5. Scratch piece of paper/small notepad
6. Pencil
7. Eraser

Marking your music is encouraged, however all marks should be done lightly and only with a pencil.

***Concert black means black dress or dress shirt, black pants, black dress shoes and black socks. If you are unsure if something counts as concert black, feel free to bring it in before or after school and I will clarify.**

Pep band:

Students are expected to stay the entire period that the band performs. Students may move from their seat when they are not playing, however, **should students not be ready to play when they are needed, the chance of moving around when students are not playing will be revoked. This means students will have to stay still throughout the entire game.**

CTS Practice Guidelines

Making a Difference- The Positive Side of Preparation

There are many levels of preparation that evolve from the time a new piece of music is passed out until it is performed. For progress to occur, each rehearsal should yield a higher level of refinement until every member of the group reaches a comfort level that enables them to perform with confidence. Making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. Conscientious preparation will cause mistakes to diminish over time. Do not confuse making mistakes with poor preparation! There is a big difference between making mistakes while playing a part that has been given a responsible amount of preparation, and merely stumbling (or not playing at all) through that same part on everybody else's rehearsal time. Frequently, additional technical exercises (scales, rudiments, etc.) will be needed to assist the musician in attaining a desired level of proficiency. As stated before, each rehearsal should yield a higher level of musical refinement. What may have been considered a great start on a piece of music will undoubtedly be considered less than adequate several rehearsals later. Achieving the common goal of making good music is a very special joy to be shared by students, director and audience. This goal is unattainable if inadequate preparation becomes commonplace. This goal, along with the joy and satisfaction associated with it, are held in high regard at CTS. A rewarding, successful experience as a member of the CTS Band is entirely within your grasp. Go ahead, "make a difference."

Practice Records: students will turn in weekly practice records as part of their homework grade. This means parents should be aware of how your child is practicing, and what they should be doing to practice. Go over these guidelines together to help encourage better practice techniques.

Practice Guidelines: A CTS Band member has a personal duty to practice for his/herself, as well as for their fellow band members. Remember, a band is only as good as its least prepared player. In order for practice to improve your playing, it must be directed toward proper goals and efficiently carried out. Before you practice, you should have a picture "in your ear" of how your instrument should sound. Listen to live and recorded music so you will know where and how you should direct your practice.

Be aware of your immediate goals. What is your greatest weakness right now? It might be sound, strength, facility, note reading, sight-reading, theory or counting. What technical problems do you most need to overcome? It might be scales, arpeggios, or rudiments. With this in mind, you can begin to practice more effectively.

How much should I practice?

The best practice is done in 15-20 minute intervals each day, three to four times a week. This is actual playing time, not including set-up and break-down or cleaning your instrument. The more often you practice, the better your progress will be. **A student cannot develop the**

proper embouchure and playing techniques if he/she tries to do all of his/her practicing in one or two longer sessions each week. You must spread out the times you practice in order for it to be effective.

When should I practice?

Try to practice at the same time, or times, each practice session. I recommend practicing when you are fresh and not cramped for time

What should I practice?

Be sure to play your entire lesson at each practice session. Make sure you spend adequate time on each piece you are studying. You need consistent effort in each piece or subject you're working on in order to make the best possible progress. In addition to your technique study and band music, you should also practice a piece of music you really enjoy playing. Concentrate on making the absolute best sound possible.

What qualities do I need for good practice?

- Concentration
 - Use your complete mind. Much of performance is mental discipline. Don't think about other things while you're practicing. Those distractions can turn your practice time into wasted time. Concentrate on the music you wish to accomplish and improve, and you will.
- Care
 - Make sure you are playing correct notes, rhythms and dynamics. Check and double check to make sure mistakes are not creeping in. Check other factors, such as hand position, evenness, sound and that the counting is correct.
- Patience
 - *I want to learn patience right now!* Yes, patience is an important factor. Many students learn pieces badly because they are impatient. Don't play anything faster than you can play it well. Don't try to learn too large of a section at one time. Count out loud and finger the notes. Practice one measure at a time if that's what it takes to master your part. Keep trying until it sounds better. Often, a new skill or technique will take weeks to develop.

How should I practice?

- How to warm up
 - When you begin each practice session try to be physically relaxed. Practice a scale, long times, a piece of music or a technique which is familiar to you and which you can play comfortably. Then begin the more difficult work of practicing

new music or a new technique. Try to stay relaxed during the entire practice session.

- Slow careful practice
 - Slow practice is the most important aid for learning to play an instrument. Most students practice an exercise or a piece much faster than they can play it accurately and cleanly. Every time you practice too fast, you miss the opportunity to correct those mistakes! Always practice at a tempo(speed) that you can play correctly! There is time to speed it up after you learn it correctly.
- Using a metronome.
 - If you have one of these devices, it will assist you in setting a tempo (speed) at which you can play a measure, phrase, or larger section easily and without mistakes. Practice your lesson a few times at a slow, steady tempo. Play the music once more at the same slow tempo, until you feel comfortable with almost no mistakes. Move the metronome up one or two notches. Now play it again at this faster tempo. Practice at the faster tempo until you again feel comfortable with your performance. Keep repeating this until you reach the desired tempo. If you begin to make mistakes, move the metronome back (slower speed). IF you do not have a metronome, you can find one online for free, or you can go without, but you must be very aware of your pacing.
- Repetition
 - Divide the music into short phrases (small parts) usually from one measure at a time to a line of music. Practice each phrase many times in a row. You will learn more quickly this way than if you work on long sections or a full page at a time. Be sure to work on connecting the small pieces you practiced into longer, understandable phrases. Whenever you have a technical exercise (Scales, arpeggios, rudiments) repeat it many times.

Beginning to learn a new piece of music

When you begin to learn a new piece of music, ask yourself the following questions:

- **What is the character of the piece?** Is it relaxed, excited, song-like, dance-like, fast, slow, smooth, separated? Does it invoke any imagery? Does the piece increase or decrease in excitement
- **What is the most difficult measure(s) of the piece?** Start practicing these first. Then and only then should you begin to combine measures into phrases and phrases into an entire piece of music.
- **What is the tempo(speed)?** You will need to keep this in mind in order to determine proper fingerings, stickings, and breaths. Write in the counting, sticking, fingerings or

new note names near difficult passages so you don't have to figure them out every practice session.

- **How fast should you be able to play the exercise?** Work on it until you have reached your personal best.

Additional Comments and Suggestions

Keep track of music!

All students will be playing with “Originals” which mean music that is not copied. Students are expected to keep track of the music. ***In the case a student loses an original, they are responsible to pay \$5 for the music.*** This fee is for replacing music, and will be refunded if the student locates the music. At the end of the year, music will be reordered, so they have the duration of the year to locate the music, however money will be collected when music is turned in.

Information will be sent out using an app called “Remind”

This is a free app, and to enroll all you need to do is text “@Chassellb” to 81010 OR you can visit the following website: <https://www.remind.com/join/chassellb> I will send out information that is relevant to the band via this option. Information MAY include performances that would be encouraged, opportunities that may be of interest, new performance dates or reminders for performance dates for the band program. Any new performance dates will be sent out by email as well as postal mail as early as possible. Please return the page below to be sure you will be emailed.

Keep your instrument in good shape at all times

Your instrument should be treated as the expensive piece of equipment that it is. Be very careful when you put together or take apart your instrument. More instruments are damaged from improper handling than any other type of misfortune.

Find a good private teacher.

A private teacher can help you with your individual problems much quicker and easier than the band director can in a large band class. Contact Mr. Clark for private teacher references.

School Band Registration Form

Grade(circle) 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

First & last name: _____

Name of parents/guardians at home: Mr _____

Mrs. _____

Home # _____ Cell # _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Instrument: _____

Did you sign up for "Remind"? Yes No Circle one

Are you renting a school instrument? Yes No Circle one

If so, please fill out the form below

School Band Instrument Agreement

In order to maintain the school owned instrument and provide your child(ren) with an instrument that works well, Chassell Schools will require a \$25.00 user fee per school year, or a maximum of \$50 per family.

Instrument _____

Model: _____ Serial # _____

Value(Director to fill in) _____ Condition: (Director to fill in) _____

Please circle what accessories are included:

Case Mouthpiece Oil/grease Strap Other: _____

Locker # _____

I agree to see that the instrument loaned to my child(ren) is properly cared for and returned with all items on the agree date. In case of loss or damage to the instrument or missing equipment while in my possession of my child(ren), I agree to pay for repairs and/or replacement of the instrument.

Signature (parent) _____

Student Event Release

By signing this paper, you permit your student(s) to participate in any and all events that the Chassell Township Music Program participates in and supports. You understand that you are responsible for picking up your child- or to set up a pick up with another parent in order for your student to get home safely. Event notifications will be sent via remind message.

Some examples of events include:

- Band Festival
- Band Clinics
- Band Trips.

A binder complete with all of these forms will be carried with Mr. Clark, and will be within reach for any issue that may come up. Please include any allergies, or medicine that your child is on. This information will only be referenced in preparation for a trip- to confirm the students has what is needed(Or Mr. Clark has it) and in case of an emergency.

Student name

Parent/Guardians Name(Print) _____

Parent/Guardians Name(Sign) _____

Any known allergies? _____

Any medications that should be brought to the attention of Mr Clark?

Anything else that Mr. Clark needs to know for your child to go to a music event with Mr. Clark?

Please continue and write more on the back if needed. Thank you!

Please return this form either in person, via your students, or via email(clarkt@cts.k12.mi.us) no later than September 14th.

