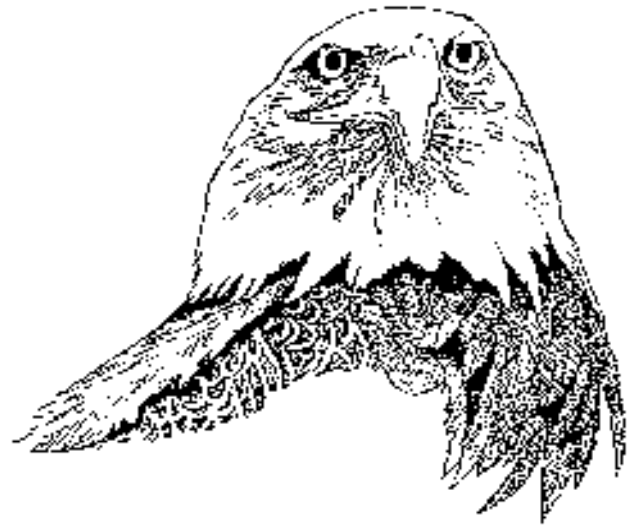


THE SETON BANDS HANDBOOK 2008-2009



INTRODUCTION

This HANDBOOK FOR THE SETON BANDS was written to help you understand a number of important details about the class and about the band.

The HANDBOOK will explain the expectations we have for this year of work together as a fine concert band.

The HANDBOOK was written so that you can use it as a helpful reference throughout the school year. Of course, as this is being written, it is impossible to include all necessary details. It will be necessary for me to further communicate with you verbally and in writing as projects and situations arise during the school year. If you have any questions or concerns about the band program at Seton do not hesitate to contact me.

I do want to welcome all of you to the Seton Band and express the wish that we will have a productive, creative, and an absolutely exciting year together practicing and performing band music.

Welcome!

Brad Curran, Director
Seton Catholic Middle School Band
September 2, 2008

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PRIME EXPECTATIONS OF YOU IN THE CLASS

As you sit in class, each one of you brings to the band your unique ability to make music with your instrument. An instrumental musician is a rare bird! Unlike the vocal student, your instrument is not a part of you. Your instrument is not human. It is not a part of your body.

Instead, it is a mechanical piece of equipment with no mind, no intelligence. You must control the device at all times. It is a device by which you and your brain create the music by making a reed vibrate, buzzing on a mouthpiece, pushing buttons, covering holes, moving a slide, striking with a stick or mallet on a drum head or a bar key.

This is difficult. In order to make this mechanical device produce beautiful sounds, you have to have something we call **TECHNIQUE**. Technique is a combination of mental and physical abilities.

One prime expectation of this class is to take your technique at whatever level you now possess and increase that technique during the year of study together. I teach in a manner by which you can, with practice and patience, improve your ability to master your mechanical piece of equipment so that you can play more beautifully.

TECHNIQUE means increasing your:

- a) reading ability
- b) fingering ability
- c) range
- d) endurance
- e) tonguing ability for wind players
- f) breath control for wind players
- h) wrist control for percussionists

All of the above are personal technical abilities we must constantly strive to improve.

Another prime expectation of this class is to improve your **MUSICALITY**, or musical sensitivity. Music is more than just technique. Music is a form of expression capable of communicating feelings or emotions. In order to play **MUSICALLY** we have to be aware of and in control of:

- a) tone
- b) articulations
- c) dynamic contrasts
- d) intonation (ability to play in tune)
- e) phrasing

All of these in conjunction with the technical skills are personal responsibilities which fall on your shoulders.

The means by which you will improve these abilities is **PERSONAL PRACTICE**. That is the homework of this class. Ten (10%) percent of your grade is determined by the amount of practicing that you do outside of school time.

The assignments and playing exams which are scheduled during the year are designed to help you improve your musical and technical abilities.

This is a large responsibility for you. In addition to your individual lessons, I am available during the school day to help teach you the ways in which you can improve your ability to make beautiful music.

You should set a realistic goal for each nine week period of the class for the achievement of this goal to improve your musical and technical abilities on the device by which you make music.

It is easy for you to fall behind in this matter of personal practice. You should make up your mind on the first day of class to *set up a regular schedule for personal practice*. I cannot do this for you. It is best that this become your responsibility. Be thoughtful and mature in your planning for the homework in this class.

PERSONAL GOALS FOR YOU

There are a small number of PERSONAL GOALS which are very important to the success of this class. Each bandperson should keep these goals in mind as we work together during the year:

1. Develop a positive attitude toward
 - a) the music we study
 - b) others in class
 - c) yourself
2. Develop an attitude of friendliness, courteousness and helpfulness toward others in class.
3. Maintain an acceptable attendance record during the year.
4. Perform in all concert appearances of the school year
5. Tolerate the uniqueness of others by
 - a) being aware, being sensitive to feelings and moods of others
 - b) developing mature relationships with others in the class
 - c) fostering a non-competitive feeling in class
 - d) avoiding the temptation of gossip
6. Develop punctualness, promptness.
7. Create outstanding performances.

It is vital that each of you personally have these goals for the class. Let them become a part of your personality.

INDIVIDUAL/GROUP LESSONS

Each of you is scheduled for an individual or group lesson with me or Mrs. Curran. The lessons are 20 minutes in length and will cover material in your lesson book, band music, and other materials I feel will help you become a better musician. The lesson schedule is posted inside and outside the bandroom and a copy is posted in the office. Most teachers will also have a copy posted in their rooms. If you have a doubt about the time your lesson is scheduled check in any of these places.

Lessons BEGIN either at the start of the period or at the halfway point. It is your responsibility to inform the teacher from whose class you will be missing of your lesson schedule. Do this the first week of lessons so that you may proceed to your lessons on time without any problems.

Please be prompt. A twenty minute lesson goes by very fast. Report to the bandroom **3 minutes before** your scheduled lesson time, get your instrument, your lesson materials, your signed practice card and take your seat. I will record your practice grade and we will proceed with the assigned lesson. You will receive a grade for each lesson, so come prepared. On days when the class schedule is shortened (due to Mass or early dismissal days, for example) follow the lesson schedule *by the period (Per. A, first half; Per. B, 2nd half, etc)*, **NOT THE CLOCK.**

MISSED LESSONS

If you must miss a lesson because of illness or a test in the classroom it is your responsibility to inform me as soon as possible why you missed that lesson. In the case of a test in the classroom, you must have your teacher sign one of the green "TEST DURING LESSON NOTICES" which you will find hanging from the shelf above my desk. You will have one week in which to arrange a make-up lesson. Failure to follow this policy will result in a zero for that lesson.

If you miss a lesson because you forgot, were ill-prepared, or you forgot your instrument, there are different consequences. ***Because your lesson is part of this course, this is considered as a truancy from class.*** The first time this happens you will receive a written warning (to be signed by your parent) and a chance to make-up that week's lesson (within a week and minus 1 point). Each subsequent miss will result in a "pink slip" to be signed by a **parent and the principal**, and **zero** for that week's. Again, you will be allowed to make up ONE such miss per quarter, to be arranged within a week of the missed lesson. This procedure will start fresh at the beginning of each quarter - you start each quarter with a clean slate.

PREPARATION OF MUSIC FOR CONCERTS

A major segment of the band's COURSE OF STUDY deals with the preparation of the music for concerts. The beauty and collective ability of our band is dependent on this preparation. It is of vital importance that each bandperson be able to play all of the technical demands of the concert music with ease and beauty.

After the sight-reading stage of music preparation, we need to work out the difficult spots in the music. Often times this must become homework for you. The rehearsals will give some of you ample time to perfect the music. But many of you will have to do something I call "wood-shedding". This is a term which simply means practicing over and over again a phrase, a measure, or what ever you cannot technically perform well. We have all experienced this situation. It might be just a few measures in a five minute composition. It is your responsibility to not fake these spots. It hurts the band's performance level. Most of these trouble spots will be discovered in rehearsals. You should be on the constant lookout for such spots in your music. Keep a list of these trouble spots. Write down the measure numbers so that you can efficiently over-come them! This remains your responsibility. Your section leader is expected to point these spots out to you if the situation persists day after day. With your dedication to erase trouble spots the Seton Band will be an organization we can all take pride in.

BAND GRADING PROCEDURE

GRADES ARE EARNED, NOT GIVEN

1. DAILY GRADE 25% of total grade
EITHER 10 or 5 or 0 points
CRITERIA : Attitude/participation/cooperation/leadership displayed during each full band rehearsal.

2. WEEKLY LESSON GRADE 15% of total grade
1-10 points earned for each lesson
CRITERIA :
 - a) note accuracy
 - b) correct articulations as printed in the music
 - c) correct rhythms
 - d) appropriate tempo
 - e) tone quality
 - f) dynamic contrasts as printed in the music
 - g) playing position- i.e., posture ,hand position, etc.

3. SCALES

15% of total grade

1-10 points earned for each scale

CRITERIA : Three scales assigned per quarter. Must be played from memory in the style appropriate for your grade level.

4. THEORY WORK

15% of total grade

1-10 points earned for each assignment / exam

CRITERIA : Three arpeggios and a rhythm test per quarter. There will also be music theory lessons with worksheets throughout the year.

5. PRACTICE TIME

10% of total grade

1-10 points earned per week

CRITERIA : Each student will receive a practice record on which to record a daily amount of practice time. **THIS RECORD MUST BE SIGNED EACH WEEK BY A PARENT** and turned in **AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH LESSON**. If this is not done, one point per day late will be subtracted from the potential score. Practice cards **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** once they are a week late. The chart below details the number of points you may earn for your practice time.

POINTS EARNED FOR PRACTICE TIME

MIN per WK	PTS	%	GRD	MIN per WK	PTS	%	GRD	MIN per WK	PTS	%	GRD
0	0	0%	F	85	6.4	64%		190	8	83%	C+
10	1	10%		89	6.5	65%		195	8	84%	
20	2	20%		93	6.6	66%		200	9	85%	B-
28	3	30%		97	6.7	67%		205	9	86%	
38	4	40%		101	6.8	68%		210	9	87%	B
42	5	50%		104	6.9	69%		215	9	88%	
45	5	51%		105	7	70%	D-	220	9	89%	
48	5	52%		112	7.1	71%		224	9	90%	
51	5	53%		119	7.2	72%	D	230	9	91%	B+
54	5	54%		126	7.3	73%		236	9	92%	
57	6	55%		134	7.4	74%		242	9	93%	A-
60	6	56%		142	7.5	75%	D+	248	9	94%	
63	6	57%		150	7.6	76%		254	10	95%	A
66	6	58%		158	7.7	77%	C-	260	10	96%	
69	6	59%		164	7.8	78%		266	10	97%	
70	6	60%		172	7.9	79%	C	272	10	98%	
74	6	61%		175	8	80%		278	10	99%	
77	6	62%		180	8.1	81%		280	10	100%	
81	6	63%		185	8.2	82%					

6. PERFORMANCES

10% of total grade

EITHER 10 or 0 points

CRITERIA : There will be a minimum of one performance per quarter. Students are **REQUIRED** to be present. Any unexcused performance will drop your grade by one letter.

7. STUDENT'S CHOICE

10% of total grade

(You **MUST** choose one for 10 points; extra credit is earned for more than one)

CRITERIA :

- Private study.
- Attend a concert (other than one of your own). You must fill out a critique form **AND** bring me a program from the concert, signed by a parent.
- Write a one and a half-page single-spaced report on a composer or a musical instrument.
- Perform a solo or ensemble in church. Please bring me a note from your parent indicating such a performance, or the church bulletin if it was notated in there.
- Play a chromatic scale in the in the style appropriate for your grade level.
- Participate in Jazz Band

You will receive 10 points for completing one of these choices. You will receive 5 extra-credit points for completing each additional *different* choice. You may choose to do two things in one particular category- such as two reports. In this case, your second report will earn 1 extra credit point.

CURRAN'S RULES OF ORDER FOR THE BANDROOM

There are a number of things you should know in order for our teaching and learning procedure to move smoothly. As a teacher I don't mind reminding you of these rules on occasion. We all forget from time to time. But the real learning process means that you will remember the rules and act accordingly.

1. There is to be no gum or candy chewed or eaten in B2.
2. It is important that each of you be respectful of another person's property - in particular their instrument. Do not use, do not touch another person's instrument. This includes the percussion instruments in the back of the room.
3. Report to the bandroom as quickly as possible. Time is short for the amount of work we must accomplish in each rehearsal. It is absolutely necessary for you to report to B2 IMMEDIATELY following your pre-band class. I will begin the rehearsal promptly 5 minutes after the bell. This allows you 7 minutes to get downstairs, get your instrument and music and find your seat. Take your seat quickly, assemble your instrument, and begin warming up quietly with long-tones and scales- **NO LOUD SOUNDS DURING WARM-UPS.**

When I step on the podium, I wish to have you silent. It is a challenge to efficiently teach in a rehearsal with so many students. I am efficient on the podium. I am prepared. I want you to be attentive, responsive and ready to learn. Disruptions from the class have no place in our rehearsals. Talking is to be non-existent, or at the very, very worst minimal. I do not intend to have to deal with discipline matters while on the podium. If I have to discipline, it robs me of teaching time and you of learning time. You are expected to conduct yourself in a manner so that maximum teaching and learning can take place.

4. I start rehearsals on time, and in respect to you, I stop rehearsals on time. Rehearsals will usually end by the 2 minute bell to give you 2 minutes to swab out, wipe off, or otherwise prepare your instrument to be put away. That gives us only 33 minutes of actual rehearsal time.
5. Because our time together is so short, it is important that everyone stops playing as soon as I give a "cut-off". I am stopping the band in order to correct a mistake, explain something to you, or teach you something that is important for you to know.
6. Please remember the class goal about being friendly, helpful and considerate of others. Please remember to be helpful to me. You and I must have mutual respect for one another. I can teach you most efficiently if you are receptive to my teaching and methods. I try my best to explain procedures carefully. It is your responsibility to follow through.
7. I am a hard worker. I will not ask anything of you that is unreasonable. If you feel that I am, please come see me personally so that we may work out our differences.

DISCIPLINE

It is hoped that each of you understands and agrees to the rules I have set up for the daily operation of this band. However, if disruptions to the rehearsal do occur or band rules are violated it is necessary to have consequences in place to deal with such incidents. The following is a list of infractions and their consequences:

- Forgotten instrument- 0 points for the day.
- Forgotten music - loss of 5 points for the day.

Tardy – a warning will be issued for the first two tardies;
habitual tardiness will result in a loss of 5 points for the day for subsequent tardies.

Each of the following infractions will result in a reflection form; a second infraction during the same rehearsal will result in a second reflection form. Any subsequent violations within the rehearsal will earn a grade of 0 points for the day and a disciplinary referral to the office.

- Chewing gum, candy, etc. in a rehearsal
- Rocking in your chair
- Talking or playing out of turn
- Swearing
- Interfering with another's learning opportunity
- Disturbing the rehearsal
- Playing of percussion instruments by non-percussionists
- Playing another student's instrument

NECESSARY SUPPLIES FOR THE CLASS

flutes

swab stick and cloth, cloth to wipe off flute

oboes

three reeds in reed box, cork grease

bassoons

three reeds in reed box, neck or seat strap, cork grease

clarinets

four reeds in reed holders, cork grease

saxophones

four reeds in reed holders, neck strap, cork grease

valved brasses

valve oil, cork or slide grease

trombones

slide oil (or cold cream & a water bottle), cork or slide grease

percussionists

one pair of matching concert sticks

INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE

You are responsible for keeping your instrument in top playing condition. This includes regular cleaning of the instrument and oiling of valves, slides and keys. Should minor problems arise, you should see me immediately. If possible I will attempt to repair the problem. If I cannot I will inform you and you will be responsible for getting the instrument to a qualified repair person.

SCHEDULED BAND PERFORMANCES FOR THE 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

The following is the schedule of performances for the 2008-2009 Seton Bands. You are responsible for being present at each of these performances. Mark the dates on your calendar at home and post this as a reminder. I will be providing details of each event two weeks prior to the dates listed below. Throughout the year we often receive other performance opportunities. Should these arise, I will provide you with any information necessary in a timely fashion.

Brad Curran, Band Director

<u>DATE / TIME</u>	<u>EVENT / LOCATION</u>
Sat. Aug. 30, 2008 12Noon	JAZZ BAND @ Fox Jazz Festival Jefferson Park, Menasha
Sat. Sept. 6, 2008 5:00PM	JAZZ BAND @ Seafood Fest Jefferson Park, Menasha
Wed. Sept. 10, 2008 Early afternoon	Small Parade Band at Parkview Nursing Home *DETAILS TO FOLLOW
Fri. Sept. 26, 2008 @ 5:30PM	St. Mary Central Homecoming Parade DETAILS TO FOLLOW
Mon. Dec. 22, 2008 6:30PM	Seton Christmas Concert SETON Gymnasium
Mon. Jan. 26, 2009 Early afternoon	CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK CONCERT SETON Gymnasium
Wed. Mar. 11, 2009 6:30PM Center, Appleton	Celebration of the Arts / TCCES Band-O-Rama Fox Cities Performing Arts
Sat. Mar. 28, 2009 @7:45AM-12:00PM (time approx.)	Annual TCCES Solo/Ensemble Festival *SETON*
Tues. April 22, 2009 7:00PM	12 th Annual Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) Concert SETON Gymnasium
Sat. May 9, 2009 @7:45AM-3:00PM (our time TBA) Lutheran*	Annual CBA Band Festival *Appleton Fox Valley
Thu. May 14, 2009 6:30PM	Seton Spring Concert SETON Gymnasium
Mon May 26, 2009 @8:30AM	Memorial Day Parade *DETAILS TO FOLLOW*
