

**CHELMSFORD HIGH SCHOOL  
BAND PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

Updated Sept. 2018

**Chelmsford High School, Chelmsford Public Schools**

# **Grades 9-12 Band Handbook**

## **Matt Sexauer, Director**

The Chelmsford High School Band Program is an arts organization and an integral part of life at the school. The Band Program is one of the largest organizations in the entire school system, with members who perform in a plethora of ensembles during and after school.

The primary goal of the Band Program is to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded music education for every student. This education focuses on cultivating a solid foundation of music theory & playing technique, upon which artistic performances are built. In addition to providing a quality music education, the Band Program also recognizes the need to educate the whole child. Band Directors seek to develop the character and citizenship of each member of the Band, assisting each student to attain his/her own personal best.

### **Nine National Music Standards:**

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

### **Meet the Band Director:**

Mr. Matt Sexauer has been a music teacher in the Chelmsford Public Schools, teaching in every facet of music education since 2001.

Matt Sexauer is a third generation musician who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and Saxophone Performance from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a Masters Degree in Instrumental Conducting from the American Band College of Sam Houston State University. His grandfather, Paul Sexauer, played horn in the General Pershing Band during World War I, and later in the John Philip Sousa Band. Matt's father, Pete Sexauer, played euphonium in the United States Military Academy Band at West Point, and more recently bass trombone in the Portland (Maine) Symphony Orchestra.

While at UMass, Matt was privileged to study with renowned saxophonist Lynn Klock, and performed under the direction of Malcolm W. Rowell, Jr., Jeff Holmes, and Dave Sporny in the University Wind Ensemble, Symphony Band, and Jazz Ensembles. From 1998 to 2000, Matt had the honor of serving as Drum Major of the University of Massachusetts Minuteman Marching Band under the direction of George N. Parks.

Matt is currently the Director of Bands at his high school alma mater, Chelmsford High School, in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. Matt graduated in 1996 and was a member of the CHS Marching Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Orchestra. His responsibilities now include direction of its Marching Band, Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble, Basketball and Hockey Pep Bands, and various chamber ensembles. In addition, Matt teaches general music classes including Music Theory, Introduction to Guitar, Jazz Studies, Music Appreciation and Music Technology.

When he isn't teaching, Matt is a freelance woodwind musician in the Greater Boston area, lending his talents to several theater companies, high school musical productions and pop music horn sections through the year. In addition, Matt also enjoys what he calls "recreational bass guitar and cello playing." Matt loves to cook and travel - particularly when it involves his wife Kate, their two daughters Abbey and Nora.

# Chelmsford High School Band Program

## Policies & Expectations

Here are the five rules for success in the Chelmsford High School Band Program:

1. Be in your seat ready to play at the start of class
2. Have all of your materials necessary for class, this includes:
  - Your instrument (mallets/sticks for percussion)
  - Any method books or handouts being used
  - Your music in an assigned folder
  - A PENCIL
3. When someone is on the podium, all band members should wait quietly for instructions.
  - Remember the rule:  
On the podium = On task
4. Performances are considered to be the pinnacle of the work the students have done up to that specific point. Performances are part of the course and students are expected to attend all concerts and public performances. Concert attire will be required for all performances. This attire will be determined by the specific performance setting. (See Concert Expectations policy)
5. Every member of the CHS Band Program is working towards the same goal: to be the best they can, so remember the following:

Everyone has a different level of musical ability. Please be tolerant and supportive of each other. BE A TEAM PLAYER.

COMMON SENSE, A POSITIVE ATTITUDE, and a WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOWARDS MUSICAL EXCELLENCE are the traits that will ensure your personal success, as well as the success of the band as a whole.

For PERCUSSIONISTS only:

Percussion requirements:

Snare Drum Sticks

Appropriate concert drumsticks include

Pro Mark SD1

Vic Firth SD1

Or similar sticks

Hard Mallets for Xylophone or Bells

Appropriate hard mallets include

Pro Mark PK60

Vic Firth M14

Innovative Percussion F9

Or similar mallets

Yarn Mallets for Marimba/Suspended Cymbal

Appropriate yarn mallets include

Pro Mark PSM10

Vic Firth M170

Practice Pad

HQ Real Feel

Stick Bag

Metronome

No member of the percussion section will be excused from class unless the following has occurred: All instruments are put away properly; all mallet instruments are covered; all music sticks/mallets are stored away properly.

## Concert Attendance Policy

The Chelmsford High School Band Program has an established tradition of excellence. To continue this tradition it is the policy of the Band Program that concerts, clinics, and performances are an integral part of the learning process in music education. Performances result in a test grade for all participating students. They are considered the culminating activity of the work students have done up to that specific point. It is expected that when students choose to participate in a performance group, they accept the responsibilities that go along with it. There will be performances and clinics outside of the regular school hours. These events are part of the course. The Director bases the grade on punctuality, effort, behavior and other related observations. Students are expected to adhere to the concert dress requirements.

It is understood that some legitimate conflicts may exist. However, outside-of-school activities should not take precedence over a graded school subject that the student has chosen. If transportation is ever a problem, understand that many students in your child's grade are also attending the concert. If there is a genuine conflict, the director needs to be informed at least 24 hours in advance by a written letter. If a student is absent from school on the day of a performance, he/she will be excused from the event.

Music groups are the ultimate team activity. Every member is essential to a quality performance. If the bass drum player, for example, does not attend a performance, the entire band suffers because of the missing part. The members of the ensembles have worked hard and deserve to perform with all of the parts represented. There must be accountability on the part of all the students who take on the responsibility of becoming a part of the Chelmsford High School Band Program.

## Performances

In order for the Band to perform well, it is vital for each member of the ensemble to attend concerts and events. Each individual musician's part contributes equally to the whole. Occasionally, you may experience a situation in which another activity conflicts with a Band performance. If this situation occurs, you must notify your directors immediately. The earlier the notification, the more likely a solution may be found. All students must remember that performance attendance & participation is 40% of their final grade.

Music ensembles receive academic credit. Academic courses require outside preparation and performance ensembles are included as well. Specific performances are scheduled after school hours and attendance is expected of all students. If a student does not attend a performance for an UNEXCUSED REASON, the student grade will be lowered by a letter grade. Students will not be able to make up this grade if they miss the performance for an unexcused reason.

In the event that a student misses a performance for an excused reason, that student will have the opportunity to make up that grade by performing the concert music for the ensemble director.

UNEXCUSED REASONS INCLUDE (but are not limited to):

- Sporting Events
- Dance Rehearsals
- Work commitments
- Lessons
- Transportation

EXCUSED REASONS ARE:

- Student is not in school during the performance day for medical or other reasons
- Family Emergency

The concert & performance schedule will be handed out in September, with ample time for you to plan your family's calendar. Please be on the lookout for emails and concert flyers.

## **Concert Attire**

Black dress shirt with long maroon tie (available through directors), blouse, or dress (all must have sleeves).  
Black dress pants or skirt. Skirts must be tea length or longer and accompanied by black opaque tights or leggings.  
Black dress shoes with black socks.  
Absolutely no jeans or sneakers.

## **Concert Etiquette**

Please respect the following principles when attending and performing at a concert:

Enter the concert hall before the performance or between entire pieces/works. Never enter or exit after the music has started, as it is distracting to the performers and fellow audience members.

Applaud at the end of a work and not between movements.

Please applaud appropriately- no whistling or shouting during the applause.

Please refrain from talking during the performance.

If you are taking pictures, please do not use a flash on your camera.

Please turn off cell phones, or put them on airplane mode if you are using them to take pictures.

## **The Marching Band Uniform**

A Marching Band's uniform has a great deal to do with how they are perceived. The dignity and care with which they are treated says a lot about a Band's respect for itself. Proper upkeep, careful storage and transportation, and correct display of the outfit are the responsibilities that accompany the privilege of wearing a CHS Marching Band uniform.

Our uniforms consist of:

Black marching shoes

Black bibber pants

Maroon jacket with silver sash and "C" insignia

Maroon cape

Black & Maroon shako

Black plume

Black gloves

A Band Uniform costs approximately \$450.00 to replace. The school entrusts it to you, and you are expected to return it in the same condition than it was loaned to you. If you lose or damage any part of the uniform, you will be charged with the replacement amount.

When not in use, the uniform is to be hung on an appropriate hanger in the Chelmsford High School uniform storage closet.

## **CHS Marching Band Uniform Regulations**

### Prohibited:

Eating & drinking (water is allowed)

Public displays of affection

Running

Inappropriate language and/or behavior

When seated, the cape must be draped over the lap – DO NOT SIT ON THE CAPE

When in uniform, you may not travel alone. If you see someone in uniform alone, join him or her. CHS Band members must be seen in public in at least pairs. Solidarity in numbers!

## **Band Program Information:**

Band meets as a class as part of the CHS class rotation. When the class lands on the first, second, fourth or fifth class in the rotation, class length is 60 minutes. When it takes place in the middle of the day (3rd block), class meets for 80 minutes.

### Assessment:

Students will be required to complete online assignments using the SmartMusic software (Please see below for SmartMusic information). These assignments will be given at the Directors' discretion throughout the year. Students will be graded on the following scale:

Performances: 40%

Practice Records/Playing Assessment Assignments: 30%

Rehearsal Attendance/Effort/Attitude: 15%

Preparation (five-point system): 15%

Instrument & accessories (mouthpiece, reeds, neck strap, sticks, mallets, etc.)

Pencil

Music

### Rehearsals:

The goal of all rehearsals is to develop musicianship and attain artistry as an ensemble. Ensemble musicianship cannot be developed until each individual member is comfortable playing his/her music. Band members should come to rehearsals with their music prepared so that the balance, blend, intonation, and tone of the ensemble can be the focus of the rehearsal. Expectations of every rehearsal are listed below:

#### Rehearsal Expectations:

Be on time to all rehearsals. Allow extra time for instrument set-up and individual warm-ups.

Be respectful and courteous to all musicians in the room. Refrain from talking or playing your instrument when the director is on the podium or running small sectional rehearsals.

Be prepared with a pencil on your stand and keep all music organized and neat in your folder/binder.

Leave the Band Room better than you found it. Maintain the set-up of the Band Room at all times, keeping chairs out of the aisles and unnecessary objects off of the floor.

Food, gum, or beverages other than water are strictly not allowed in the Band Room.

## **Care and Maintenance of Your Instrument**

Proper care and maintenance of your instrument will enhance your performance and will limit the number of trips your instrument will take to the repair shop. The instrument you are bringing back and forth to school every day is the most expensive piece of equipment that you most own (yes, they are worth more than iPads and your cell phone!). They are easily broken if handled incorrectly. Consistent repairs are an unnecessary addition to the financial cost of the instrument, so please adhere to the following guidelines:

Assemble/disassemble your instrument properly.

Take your reeds off EVERY time!

When possible, clean your hands and brush your teeth before playing (travel size bottles of mouthwash and hand wipes are a great addition to your music bag).

Keep your mouthpiece clean. If it is plastic, you can actually wash it in the sink with the dishes!

ABSOLUTELY do not store books or music inside the instrument case.

Keep the instrument in its case when you are not playing it.

A qualified instrument technician should make repairs.

Use a durable luggage tag on your instrument case and include your name, address, phone number, and email address.

## **Private Lessons**

All student musicians are strongly encouraged to take weekly private lessons. There is a lesson program provided at a very good rate through Chelmsford Community Education throughout the school year and summer. There are also many professional musicians in town that teach privately. Information is available at [www.chelmsfordcommunityeducation.org](http://www.chelmsfordcommunityeducation.org), or please contact Mr. Sexauer for references.

## **Extra-Curricular & Select Performance Group Requirements**

There are a wide variety of extra-curricular and select performance opportunities available to students at Chelmsford High School. Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Combo, Winter Percussion, Musical Pit Orchestra, and a variety of Chamber Music ensembles are just a few of these groups.

These ensembles require different levels of musicianship as well as dedication to rehearsals and performance schedules. Students who become members of these organizations will be held accountable for:

Learning the required materials

Following rehearsal/performance expectations as set by the director

Adhering to the rehearsal and performance schedule

In addition to the above requirements, each director may have his or her own set of guidelines for their specific ensemble.

If a student fails to meet the requirements or expectations of the group he/she will be subject to disciplinary actions by the director including possible dismissal.

Students are asked to remember that they represent Chelmsford High School, and Band Program as a whole, and their ensemble. This is a privilege rather than a right. As members of these ensembles, students will adhere to standards of moral and ethical conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the policies of Chelmsford High School regarding academic eligibility, behavior on and off school grounds and substance abuse. The standards of all ensembles at CHS shall always adhere to, and often times may exceed the school policy.

## **Band Parent Guide: What Can YOU Do?**

- Ensure that your child is set up to complete assessment assignments.
- Help your child be prepared for class by giving reminders to bring their instrument and all materials to school on days that they have Band rehearsal.
- Encourage your child to play for others when the opportunity arises.
- Arrange a regular scheduled time for practice, and find a quiet place for practice.
- Students should own a folding music stand to practice with good posture while at home.
- Become familiar with your child's music. Take time to listen to their practicing.
- Provide a safe place to store musical instruments.
- Seek weekly private lessons taught by professional instrumentalists for your child.
- Help keep the instrument in good playing condition with a supply of reeds, cleaning swabs, valve oil, etc.
- Contact Mr. Sexauer with concerns throughout the year as they arise.
- Visit the Band Room while your child has a rehearsal. Our doors are open to willing listeners!
- Notify the Directors if your child is to be absent or late to rehearsal that takes place outside of school hours.