



Pitt Meadows Secondary School
Music Department

Elementary Band Program

A Handbook for Parents and Students

Updated Fall 2020

Music Department
Pitt Meadows Secondary School
École secondaire Pitt Meadows
19438 -116B Avenue
Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 1G1
www.pmssmusic.com

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Congratulations! Your child is interested in joining the SD42 Elementary Band program that is offered at your school through Pitt Meadows Secondary.

The elementary band program is a very rewarding experience. Your child has the opportunity to learn a new skill, make new friends, and participate in many activities. Examples of past activities include: trips to the Vancouver Symphony, field trips to music festivals, band retreats at local camps, and overnight sleepovers at PMSS. This year we will still find ways to do experiential learning within the framework of our COVID-19 Safety Protocols.

Music is a very important part of your child's education. Like participating in a sport, learning a musical instrument is a physical skill which requires regular practice and participation. Each member of the band is essential to the success of the "team." However, unlike sports, music allows students to express themselves and respond creatively to the demands of the music.

This handbook will outline the expectations for each student and parent participating in the band program. Please read through the book and take note of the details so that you and your child can have a successful band experience.

I look forward to seeing your child grow as a musician over the next few years! Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions, ideas, or concerns about the band program.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Renaud
Elementary Band Director
nicholas_renaud@sd42.ca

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COVID-19 Safety Protocols

The following important safety protocols that have been developed by the CDC to make sure we stay safe:

- All of our non-cohorted classes will be CAPPED at 20 students to allow for ample physical distancing in the Band Room (the Band Room normally has capacity for 90 students).
- Students will be required to sanitize their hands upon entry to the class and exit.
- Students will face forward and have the required physical distance between them at all times as required by the CDC.
- Students will not share instruments.
- No in-person concerts or inter-school festivals/competitions/etc..
- No overnight music activities (to be re-assessed throughout the year).

More information on the above is available on the CDC website (scroll down to Activities>Singing):
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/childcare-schools/schools>

PMSS ELEMENTARY BAND PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. To promote the appreciation and understanding of all types of music.
2. To promote the ability and desire to participate in the performance of music.
3. To encourage critical thinking skills, awareness and individual growth.
4. To promote responsibility and cooperation through musical performances.
5. To encourage students to be creative and innovative through music.
6. To teach students to become disciplined and responsible individuals.
7. To promote pride, poise and a sense of accomplishment in one's hard work.

DIRECTOR'S EXPECTATIONS

In order to reach these seven objectives, it is important that students realize that the following will be expected of them in the band program:

1. You will be expected to be a member of this program for one year.
2. You will be expected to maintain a regular practice schedule.
3. You will be expected to maintain regular participation with the group during rehearsals and performances.
4. You will be expected to work cooperatively with the conductor and the other members of the band.

PITT MEADOWS SECONDARY MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Elementary Band Expectations in the Classroom

In order for our band classes to run as smoothly as possible, please keep the following in mind while in band class:

- 1) You should be in “Concert Rest” at all times when not playing
- 2) Once rehearsals has begun, instruments should not be played unless Mr. Renaud has indicated it is okay to do so.
- 3) Raise your hand to speak, ask questions or make a request (such as the bathroom).
- 4) Do not leave your seat for **any** reason until you have raised your hand and been given permission (this is to protect other students’ instruments that may be on the floor).
- 5) If Mr. Renaud is working with a specific student, or group of students, please remain quiet to allow Mr. Renaud to work as quickly and efficiently as possible—practice your fingerings or work on your theory.
- 6) Do not play your friend’s instruments as this will spread germs and may result in an instrument getting damaged.
- 7) Please only bring a water bottle to band; **no food or other drinks in the band room**. Food can get stuck in your instrument and attract bugs and bacteria.

If you choose to break one of the above rules, you will be given a warning. If you break a rule again, you will be asked to pack up.

If you are late. . .

Please enter quietly and raise your hand so Mr. Renaud can mark you as present.

If you forgot your instrument. . .

You are still expected to be at class. Use a pencil and “Pretend Play.” You will be given a “Forgotten Instrument Notice” that you need to take home, get signed by your parent, and return to Mr. Renaud.

If you are absent. . .

Bring a note next class from your parent or have them email to excuse your absence.

In addition to your instrument, please **always** bring to class:

- 1) Standard of Excellence Method Book
- 2) Theory Book
- 3) Pencil
- 4) Sheet Music

INSTRUMENT SELECTION

For **Beginners** . . .

Beginner Band students have a choice of the following instruments:

Woodwinds:

Flute
Clarinet

Brass:

Trumpet
Trombone
Baritone

Ideally, I would have preferred to sit down with each student and assessed his/her individual capabilities in order to choose the instrument best suited. Things such as previous musical experiences, facial structure, teeth, braces, lip size, hand and body size, and manual dexterity can affect whether a student experiences success on their chosen instrument. Unfortunately, there is not enough time and resources to be able to individually assess each student. I work hard to monitor each student's progress in the first few weeks of classes, but it is imperative that both students and parents communicate with me if a student is experiencing problems learning their instrument.

For students interested in the **SAXOPHONE** . . .

A band will not sound like a band if everyone plays the same instrument. A band of 50 should only have 2 alto saxophones. Usually, too many students decide that they would like to play the saxophone. Since this is a very expensive and fragile instrument, these students are asked to play the clarinet. Students demonstrating excellent attendance and perfect practice records will be considered to switch to the saxophone.

For students interested in **PERCUSSION** . . .

Percussion is a very exciting and challenging place to be in the band. Students wishing to try percussion will be asked to audition later in the school year. This audition will evaluate students' rhythmic ability. Piano experience is also recommended.

For **Advanced Band Students** . . .

Some students are interested in trying a new instrument after completing their first or second year of band. This is not recommended for everyone. Switching instruments is very challenging and requires perseverance, extra practice, patience and dedication. However, the band will require some students to take on this challenge in order to make the band sound even better. Instruments that are needed in the band by the second or third year include tuba, baritone, bass clarinet, bassoon, oboe and french horn. PMSS owns all of these instruments, so families can rent for a much lower cost than renting from a music store.

BAND FEES

Your band fees pay for sheet music, field trips and other related music expenses. The annual trip to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra concert is covered by this fee.

The Beginner Band Sleepover, the Advanced Band Retreat and the Elementary Band BBQ costs are collected separately. Your child will also have the opportunity to participate in fundraising throughout the year.

****PLEASE SEND ALL MONEY SEALED IN AN ENVELOPE. THE ENVELOPE SHOULD STATE YOUR CHILD'S NAME AND BAND. CHEQUES MADE OUT TO "PMSS" ARE PREFERRED. Cash can be lost and is untraceable. Cheques are much more secure.**

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Other than a desire to learn, there are several items which are necessary to have in order to begin participation in band.

1. An Instrument:

Each child needs to supply their own instrument, but this does not mean you need to buy one. In fact, the purchase of an instrument is usually discouraged until it is determined that your child will be successful with their chosen instrument. For some children, this may take a few trials. It is recommended that you rent an instrument from one of the major music companies. These instruments are rented at an affordable monthly rate. You can be assured that it is a fine quality starter instrument which will perform properly for your child. If you are going to purchase an instrument, please ensure you do so from a reputable Music Store, not from outlets such as Costco or London Drugs, etc. The instruments sold at non-music stores are of inferior quality and break easily. The instrument repair shops will often refuse to repair these instruments because they are made from such poor quality materials.

If you have an instrument at home which you wish your child to play, it is strongly recommended that this instrument is checked out carefully by the director before playing begins. Musical instruments, like anything else, deteriorate over time and should be checked out annually. Most musical instruments that have not been used for a few years do require some repair work to ensure that the instrument works effectively.

2. A Music Stand:

This is probably the most underrated investment one can make! A folding wire music stand costs so little (approx. \$18.00) and does more than just hold music up off the floor. It ensures correct posture by keeping the head and neck in a straight line and thereby encouraging success. As well, it ensures that practice at home is done in the same manner as it is in school. **Students receiving band instruction at their own elementary school need to bring their music stand to band class!**

3. Band Books:

Each student will be expected to purchase a band method book and a theory book. PMSS has a selection of used books that students may use for free.

- Standard of Excellence Book 1 (Beginners)
- Standard of Excellence Book 2 (Advanced)
- Alfred's Essentials of Theory Book 1 (Advanced)

4. Care Kits:

Each instrument needs certain items for the proper playing and maintenance of that instrument. It is expected that all beginners, except flute players and percussionists, purchase a care kit from the music store at the time of rental. Most of the items for the care of the flute and drums can be found at home. Care kits items can also be purchased separately. Students should have all the items listed below for their instrument. Clarinet and saxophone students should always have extra reeds at home.

- Flutes:
- 1) Flute cleaning rod (comes with flute)
 - 2) Thin rag for cleaning the inside the flute
 - 3) Soft rag for polishing instrument

Clarinets/Saxophones:

- 1) Cleaning Swab
- 2) Cork grease
- 3) Soft rag for polishing instrument
- 4) Minimum of THREE reeds in the instrument case (*begin with #2 reeds)
- 5) Reed-guard
- 6) Woodwind mouthpiece brush

Trumpet/Baritones:

- 1) Valve oil
- 2) Mouthpiece brush
- 3) Tuning slide cream
- 4) Soft rag for polishing instrument

Trombone:

- 1) Slide Cream
- 2) Mouthpiece brush
- 3) Water Spray Bottle - small
- 4) Soft rag for polishing instrument

5. Band Uniform:

All elementary band students will be performing in "full uniform" several times this year:

- Black or dark shoes (not runners)
- Black or dark socks (girls may wear plain black nylons)
- Black pants (no dresses or skirts)
- Black Band T-Shirt (tucked in) - **included in your band fees**

6. Other Necessary Items:

A pencil is required for class. All Beginners will be given a cardboard music folder. A vinyl band folder is optional for Advanced Band students. All of the above items, with the exception of the music stand and uniform, should be brought to every class.

ELEMENTARY BAND EVALUATION

Students will receive a band report card three to four times each year. This report card usually comes home from your elementary school around the time of your regular school report. This report is meant to be informative and will include the following:

- 1) Absences
- 2) The number of classes with no instrument
- 3) Practice Record Scores
- 4) Concert Attendance
- 5) Theory and Assignment Scores
- 6) Preparation (does your child attend class with all required materials?)
- 7) Musical Evaluation broken down into the following categories:
 - a) Posture and Position
 - b) Tone Quality
 - c) Note accuracy
 - d) Rhythmic Accuracy
 - e) Articulation/Tonguing
- 8) A written comment

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Renaud if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's report card.

BAND AWARDS

At the final concert in June, some students may earn an award for demonstrated excellence in band.

- Outstanding Dedication in Band** - Presented to students who demonstrate an excellent attitude towards band, excellent attendance in class; perfect attendance at concerts, perfect practice records and have all assignments completed to the best of their ability.
- Director's Award** - Presented to students who demonstrate all qualities listed for the Dedication Award, but who also excel on their instrument and are leaders in the classroom.

12 IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT PRACTICING

1. Practice is necessary in order to make progress on your instrument and to develop technical skills as a musician.
2. Regular, daily practice of twenty minutes is far more valuable than practicing 2-3 hours once a week.
3. Those who don't practice hold back the rest of the group.
4. Beginning a year with a regular practice routine is far easier than trying to develop them after some time has passed. The longer one waits, the more difficult this becomes. Designate a spot in the house that is **YOUR PRACTICE SPOT**. Keep your instrument, books and music stand in **YOUR PRACTICE SPOT**. See if you can practice at the same time every day.
5. You have made a commitment to be a member of this group and to practicing regularly. It is never too early to learn what commitment means.
6. Band is a progressive experience. One cannot go on to new challenges and situations until the present ones are met.
7. Regular daily practice is important in order to develop a strong embouchure which will build range and endurance on your instrument.
8. Practice time should be time spent learning something new or learning how to do something that couldn't be done before. Playing over things already learned is performing, not practicing. Thirty minutes of effective practicing (learning) time is far more valuable than two to three hours of repetition of old material.
9. Most successful band students are very regular in all their efforts towards band, including practicing.
10. Learning how to be consistent in practice will carry over into being consistent in other areas, such as homework.
11. You have made a considerable financial investment, and you should get your money's worth.
12. Practice records should be filled in and signed regularly.

Don't forget to perform for your family and friends on a regular basis!!

HOW TO PRACTICE:

- i) Practice in a place free from distractions
- ii) Follow this timeline:
 - 15 min Practice music that you find challenging. Fix spots that gave you trouble in class. Look up any fingering / slide positions
 - 5 min. Play for fun! Play your favorites.
- iii) Have your practice record filled in and signed ASAP!

PRIVATE LESSONS?

Private lessons may be considered when a child enters the band program. There are many advantages enjoyed by students who are taking private lessons. Private lessons are not mandatory for participation in a band program.

Those students who take private lessons are not just students who need extra help. Many students who are having difficulties do end up seeing a specialist to help solve the problem. But these lessons should not be considered for this purpose only. Private teachers can help every band student to achieve greater success and more rapid advancement.

The main benefit with private lessons is that the private teacher is able to very carefully monitor the practice time in order to ensure that this time is being used as wisely as possible. Students who take extra lessons, therefore, usually don't play "catch-up" with their band material. Instead they are regularly ahead of the class and so can enjoy the music more.

Private teachers can also go into greater detail with the instrument than the band teacher could. The student will have a greater understanding of how to play and again will enjoy it more in the long term. This will lead to a much greater possibility of the student enjoying music for the rest of their life!

The cost of private lessons varies quite considerably. For beginning students, an experienced PMSS musician may be available at \$10.00 / 1/2 hour. For intermediate students, a college level musician may be correct. The general rule is this: Hire the best teacher that you can comfortably afford. In this way, you will surely get your money's worth.

If you would like to consider private lessons, Mr. Renaud would be happy to discuss the subject with you.

INSTRUMENT REPAIRS

One of the main problems with musical instruments is that it is difficult to determine when an instrument needs repair. With people who have little or no experience on band instruments, this can be impossible. It is important that those who do not play the instrument do not attempt to identify the problems with the instrument or to try to repair it at home.

It is a better idea to ask Mr. Renaud to examine the instrument. He should be able to identify the problems for you. He can then either repair it for you, or recommend some shop time. If he cannot identify the problems, then it certainly needs to be sent to a professional repair shop.

When the instrument needs to go into a shop, it is important that it be done right away. The longer one waits, the more frustrated the player will become. This may eventually lead to the student wanting to quit, simply because the instrument didn't work properly!

It is also crucial that instruments needing repair go into a reputable repairman. A good repairman will do the job faster and make sure the instrument work properly. If you are renting from a music store, then the store will take care of repairs, and usually supply a "loaner" instrument in the meantime. If you own your instrument, Mr. Renaud can recommend a reputable repair shop to have your repairs done.

Many parents request that their child play on an instrument that is already in the household, rather than renting or purchasing another. This is okay under certain conditions. The instrument should first go to Mr. Renaud for an examination of its condition. He can make some minor repairs, suggest a repair shop for major repairs or recommend that the instrument is not worth fixing. All instruments should have an annual "tune-up" as a matter of routine to keep it playing properly.

FUNDRAISING AND TRIPS

For most of us, the most memorable experiences from school are those which were unique, fun and educational. As part of our program, we like to give our students the opportunity to travel. **This year, we will still have many field trips in accordance with BC's COVID-19 Safety Protocols.** Whether it be a local festival, a retreat or a major tour, these excursions give students valuable opportunities to learn. Most, if not all, of these experiences cannot be duplicated in the classroom.

All excursions cost money -for school buses, tickets, entry fees, etc. Therefore, most music programs in BC like to give students and parents the opportunity to raise funds to help them reduce the cost of these activities. It is important to mention that all fundraising is entirely optional. This year, we will be exploring possible fundraisers we can do to help make these sorts of experiences happen.

Typically, when a student joins a music program, they begin an individual music account with us until they leave the program. All money that they earn goes into their personal account that is kept by our treasurer. When a student leaves the program, any money left in the account will be used to promote music at PMSS. Students may use their fundraising money for trips, fees, musicwear or anything else music-related. Students may not withdraw band money when they leave the program. They may pass it on to a sibling.

Typical music fundraisers often include Entertainment books, Purdy's Chocolates, Poinsettias, Spring Planters, and Krispy Kreme Donuts. New ideas are welcome and parents willing to help organize are even more welcome!

ELEMENTARY BAND NEWSLETTERS

All communication goes out via email. Please check your junk mail folder to make sure these important letters aren't getting missed!

QUARTER NOTES

Over the course of the year, students will have opportunities to earn quarter notes for excellence in work; concert attendance or perfect practice sheets. These Quarter Notes are saved until the barbecue at the end of the year. A raffle takes place at the barbecue where students can win prizes. Lost Quarter Notes cannot be replaced.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS

By enrolling in the beginning band class, your child will be learning a skill which they have never done before. Beginning to play a musical instrument is similar to learning a new language without previously knowing anything about that language. It will take a continued, dedicated effort to be fluent in the language of music. Mr. Renaud will offer as much encouragement as possible in class, but it is very important that encouragement come from home as well. This can come in many ways.

The new musician will need a good, positive “practice atmosphere”. This is a place that is quiet and undisturbed for at least 20 minutes each day, preferably at the same time each day. More than just a location, though, it is a feeling that what the new musician is trying to accomplish is appreciated and not an imposition on the rest of the family. Instead it is a special project to be admired by other people.

Rather than “send them off to the garage” to practice, it is important that others take an interest in what is being practiced. The first sounds are not always pleasant to listen to, but who ever learned a new language fluently in one day? In the beginning, the important thing to be rewarded is the effort put forth just to learn those first few sounds.

Some children in the beginning need an external reward for doing their daily practice. By saying to the new musician that “this is your thing and it is up to you practice” shows a lack of concern for what they are doing. A small reward afterwards, such as allowing an opportunity to do a favorite activity, could be very beneficial to many. Expecting a child to get sufficient personal reward from practicing, may be asking too much in the beginning. **A pat on the back goes a long way for everyone!**

Some students take band on a “trial basis” to “see if I like it.” This is okay since one will never know exactly what it is like until it is tried. But parents should emphasize that the **trial period is for one year**, not two or three months. By making the trial period for two months, the student never really gets committed to practicing, since “I probably won’t like it anyhow.” Success then drops and this further reinforces the notion that the student probably would not like band anyway! The band program then becomes a self-defeating cycle.

If the trial period is for one year, then the student will have had time to achieve some success before the decision is made. By now all students will have had a chance to play in some concerts, get some recognition for their effort, and begin to make music, not just sounds. These successes will make practicing consistently worth it and something that the student knows will pay off. The “real band experience” is at the final concert in June where the students are finally given the recognition from the audience for a full year’s work in band.

The most successful students are the ones who are most organized and regular in their activities. Things such as irregular attendance, tardiness, late assignments, practice records not filled in, and forgotten instruments all lead to much lower success rates. Experienced band students have learned well the lesson that good organization and regular effort will pay great rewards!

APPENDIX I
SAMPLE PRACTICE RECORD



ELEMENTARY BAND PRACTICE RECORD

Student Name _____ Parent Signature _____

Band: _____ Total Minutes: _____ Mark out of 50: _____

Class Time, rehearsals, and concerts do not count as practice time

ELEMENTARY BAND Students:

You are expected to practice 500 minutes each month, which works out to 20 min each day, for 25 days out of the month. Write down the minutes that you practice every day. Write an X on the days you don't practice. Turn this sheet in before the 5th of the following month. You will earn one quarter note for every 500 minutes and a second one for every extra 100 minutes. If you are ill and otherwise unable to practice, please indicate this on your record. You may also include practice minutes for other instruments to earn extra quarter notes, but your BAND minutes must not be less than 500 each month.

Parent:

Work out the best time for your student to practice each day. A set schedule is recommended for best results. Students should be practicing in a quiet location with a music stand. Please initial on every day that your student practices. Add up the minutes at the end of the month, total and sign at the top right hand corner of the page.

September 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

APPENDIX II
SAMPLE REPORT CARD

April 3, 2020

Elementary Band Progress Report - Term 2

Page 1

Pitt Meadows Secondary SD42

Student: Student Name
Address Line 1
Pitt Meadows, BC

Teacher: Renaud, Nicholas

Class: ASSIGNED TIME 8 ELEM BEG BAND
(XAT--08-EB-01)

DAYS ABSENT FROM BAND: 1

DAYS WITHOUT INSTRUMENT: 0

Assignments

Date Due	Category	Name	Pts Earned	Max Pts	Percent
04/01/2020	AssignmentsQuizzes	Concert Response - Winter Concert	Omit	25	
11/12/2019	ConcertParticipation	Winter Concert 2019	10	10	100.0%
28/02/2020	ConcertParticipation	Elem Band Collab Day	10	10	100.0%
11/03/2020	ConcertParticipation	Spring Concert 2020	10	10	100.0%
09/03/2020	MusAchieve	Articulation T2	ME	4	
09/03/2020	MusAchieve	Note Accuracy T2	ME	4	
09/03/2020	MusAchieve	Posture and Position T2	ME	4	
09/03/2020	MusAchieve	Rhythm Accuracy - T2	ME	4	
09/03/2020	MusAchieve	Tone Quality - T2	ME	4	
05/01/2020	PracticeRecords	Practice Record December 2019	50	40	125.0%
10/02/2020	PracticeRecords	Practice Record January 2020	50	50	100.0%
24/02/2020	PracticeRecords	Practice Record February 2020	50	50	100.0%
11/03/2020	Prep	Preparation - Term 2	60	66	90.9%