

THE BEARCAT BEGINNING BAND

SHERMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

Welcome to Band!

The Bearcat Band has a long tradition of musical excellence.

Sherman ISD is very proud of the band's reputation of high-quality effort, character and teamwork. Great music happens because of these qualities. It is the expectation that each student will:

- Be responsible for his or her own actions
- Make great choices
- Own their mistakes and celebrate them as an opportunity for growth
- Always support their band family.

Band is intended to be a place of enjoyment, comfort, creativity and pride. The outstanding students who make up this family see to it that this is upheld daily.

Director Contact Information:

Annette Mitchell, Sherman Director of Bands
AnMitchell@shermanisd.net

Caitlyn Hilliard, Sherman Associate Director
CHilliard@shermanisd.net

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ARE GETTING OUR UPDATES!

To receive communication & info about band this year make sure to sign into these locations and update your contact:

CharmsOffice.com

Login: **ShermanMSBand**

First login, do a password reset. Makes sure to record and communicate this login with all family members and your student.

Remind Messaging Service

Text the number: **81010** & enter the following @message for your class, or use the App:
Beginning Band – **@sherband23**

On the web

<https://www.shermanisd.net/Domain/595>

Facebook

Facebook.com/ShermanMSBand/

Inside:

In the following pages, you will find, the guidelines for the Bearcat Band.

Every member and their family must review the information inside and work with the directors to uphold these expectations for our program to be successful. Please make sure to initial and sign the final pages and turn them in to the directors.

Please return the permission and acknowledgement forms:



Grading & Attendance Policy

SMS Band follows the Sherman ISD grading & attendance policy.

- Concerts = Mastery Grade
- Band class = Daily Grade
- Quizzes (non-mastery) and Performance Evaluations (mastery) of music covered in class are administered in class, via SmartMusic or Canvas.
- Pass-Offs (Mastery) can be completed on SmartMusic or in some cases at assigned times during class, or on designated dates before/after school.
- Students must be prepared with all equipment and supplies daily, perform at concerts, and conduct themselves appropriately to maintain the privilege of participating in their assigned group.

Practice Expectations

At the beginning of the year students will have specific assignments each night that build up to playing their instrument.

Once we begin playing, students will start with a small number of minutes per night and then gradually build up until they are playing approximately 30 minutes per night.

Performance in class does not count as practice time. Set aside time every day to work on your music and prepare your parts to support your team!

Performance Expectations

Students will be expected to attend and will earn grades at all of the following co-curricular activities:

1. Group Performances
 - Fall Concert (November or December)
 - Spring Concert (February)
 - Final Concert (May)
 - Spring Festival Performance (April or May)
2. Individual or Small-Group Performances
 - Solo & Ensemble Festival (May)

After Performances

After each performance, students who are waiting for a ride will need to wait in a designated area. At Sherman Middle School, this is the band room loading dock on the west side of the building (door #7). At Sherman High School, the students will wait at the back band door (#11) on the north side of the building.

Students must be picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the activity.

Practice Room Policy

Hours

- 7:30 – 8:20am
- 3:55 – 4:45pm

Students who stay after school for band must remain in the band room until their ride arrives. They may not go outside or go to other areas of the building to wait. Out of respect for the directors and their families, students must be picked up no later than 4:45pm. Students may not wait later by themselves.

Behavior Expectations

Students are expected to be always playing their instrument as they are using the band facilities before and after school. Lights are to remain on. There will be no food or drinks in the practice rooms. Students who are eating, off-task, or misbehaving will lose practice room privileges at the directors' discretion.

School Behavior Clause

Students who are assigned to DAEP and miss long stretches of band instruction may lose their ability to participate in band for the year. It is incredibly hard for most students to miss beginning band instruction and catch up upon return. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Private Lessons

Private lesson instruction is available to all members of the SMS Band. Students in lessons will have individualized help from a professional musician that will help them advance faster in their musical learning.

Cost: \$20 per week

Time: During their band class or before/after school based on the teacher's schedules.

Scholarships may be available. Applications can be picked up from your director.

Contact info is available on our webpage:



Care of the Band Areas, Instrument, and Self

Band Hall Area

- Food and drink (other than water in a bottle) will be kept in the cafeteria.
- Gum is a danger to instruments and wind players, so it will not be allowed in the band area.
- Stands will be for holding music only.

Instrument

- Sherman ISD and Sherman MS are not responsible for the damage or loss/theft of instruments.
- For your protection, both school-owned and individually owned instruments should be insured.
 - Most rental instruments have insurance available through the music store.
 - Insurance may be available with your Home/Renter's Insurance (please contact your provider)

Lockers

- A lock and a nametag are provided for every student.
- Lost locks or nametags must be replaced (for a fee).
- Lockers should be locked when the instrument is inside. SISD is not responsible for items left in an unlocked locker.

Personal Injury Protection

- Sherman ISD does not provide insurance for student injury.

Student Discipline

Discipline is a quality that must come from within the individual. As such, each student is responsible for his or her own actions as a member of the SMS Bearcat Band. **Any student who shows an inability to work effectively in class will be reassigned to another class.**

As a school group, members will follow campus and school board policies any time they participate in a band function. Any student who violates school rules while with the SMS Band will be subject to all usual school disciplinary procedures. In addition, those students may be subject to dismissal from band or suspension from all band travel.

Extra-Curricular & Non-Performance Social Events

The SMS Bearcat Band will occasionally participate in non-performance activities and social events as a reward for students who are in good standing. To be in good standing, a student will:

1. Be passing all classes following the SISD academic eligibility guidelines
2. Have demonstrated excellent conduct and behavior in class, in school, and on trips
3. Have attended all concerts and performances
4. Have attended all section rehearsals or followed expectations for making up work in the event of an absence
5. Have been picked up on time following events throughout the year.

Because band is a team, and missing parts and instruments affects the entire group, participation in the Sherman Bearcat Band is **at least a one-year commitment.**

Special Note – A student must pass band and/or have a director's recommendation to be enrolled for the next semester of band.

Digital Citizenship

Maintaining a higher standard of conduct includes ensuring that band member websites and social media are appropriate. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Members are responsible for their personal postings, as well as posting from or on other students' pages.

The areas of appropriateness will include, but are not limited to profane, foul, or disrespectful language; pictures; inappropriate poses or clothing; references to alcohol, drugs, or tobacco; postings that could be interpreted as being negative or threatening towards other SISD teaching staff or band members; or postings that demonstrate poor sportsmanship or a disrespectful attitude towards other bands.

In addition to the above, band members that violate the guidelines may be subject to the following:

- Upon confirmation of the violation, the band member will be asked to remove any offensive items from the website(s) and give an apology and plan of action to deter this behavior. Parents/guardians will be contacted and made aware of the offensive behavior.
- If a violation occurs that is deemed to be more serious in nature, including but not limited to threats, bullying, or a series of violations, the student may be subject to a higher level of discipline as determined by the band directors, including suspension, probation, or dismissal from band.

Alternate Transportation

- Any parent wishing to pick up their student from an event must be there in person to take them and have completed an alternate transportation form prior to the day of the trip. Students will not be released to other parents during the trip.
- Any parent wishing to drive their student to an event **where the full group is travelling by bus** must complete an alternate transportation form prior to the day of the trip. Then, the parent and student must meet with the band director upon arrival to ensure the student is accounted for and kept safe.



Concerts

- Concerts have THREE parts:
 1. Warm-up,
 2. The Performance, and
 3. Listening/audience participation.
- The concert begins at the warm-up. **Be on time!**
- The concert ends when the last group performs. Texas Standards for band include listening to performances and being an audience member.
- All concerts are a group effort, therefore **ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED!**
- Students are responsible for having their equipment at all concerts. The directors will not have extra instruments, mouthpieces, reeds, or music.

Concert locations include:

- Sherman MS Auditorium
- Sherman MS Gym
- Sherman HS Auditorium
- Scott MS, Denison

Contacting the Band Directors

The directors spend every moment possible teaching students and making sure we take advantage of every minute we have with them. This means that we are often unavailable before or after school to speak to parents. The best ways to contact us include:

- E-mail, available on the front page.
- Remind Message (see the front page for sign up codes).
- Note, sent with your child. Please include your name and contact information.
- Conference, set up with us via e-mail or through a note.