



# ***BAND HANDBOOK***

***Band Directors:***

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***Talking Points: District Communication***

# WELCOME...

...to Shotwell Academy and **The Mighty Shotwell Shark Band!**

Our goal is to provide a musical education that will help you towards being successful in all avenues of life. We do not expect every person to be a virtuoso musician or performer. We do expect mature, responsible attitudes and actions – and lots of hard work! There are no bench players in band, EVERYONE is a starter.

The success of any organization is dependent on the spirit, pride, leadership, teamwork, dedication and cooperation of all its members. Certain rules, guidelines and procedures are necessary so that the overall goals of the group are met and the welfare of each individual is best served.

Being in the band program is not a pick and choose what to participate in. By being enrolled in this program you are agreeing to participate in all that is required of you.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a written policy on the organization, grading system, and expectations of the Shotwell Academy Band Program. It is not intended to be all-inclusive, as every possible situation and question cannot be predicted in advance; however, a thorough knowledge of these materials is essential to the smooth operation and success of the band program. **Parent(s) are to sign and submit the Emergency Treatment Form.**

## Shotwell Band Staff:

The teacher's name on your students schedule MAY NOT reflect who actually instructs that course.

### **Mr. Rudy Cano – Director of Bands**

- Conducts and grades students enrolled in Honors Band, Beginner: Flutes, Clarinets and Percussion
- Assists with instrumental instruction in Symphonic Band and Concert Band
- Instructs Master Classes for all Woodwinds and Percussion

### **Mr. Luis Portillo – Associate Director of Bands**

- Conducts and grades students enrolled in Symphonic Band and Concert Band, Beginner: High Brass, Low Brass and Saxophones.
- Assists with instrumental instruction in Honors Band
- Instructs Master Classes for all Brasses

# Code of Conduct:

## Band Hall Rules & Essential Agreements

- Follow instructions the first time they are given.
- Follow all learned procedures.
- Bring your instrument and all necessary materials to class **EVERYDAY**.
- Respect yourself and your property, as well as others and their property – if it is not yours, do not touch it.
- Non-band students are not allowed in the band hall at any time.

## Care of the Band Hall

- **Band Hall** – Is a safe-haven for musical creativity. Only band members are allowed inside. There is no playground behavior accepted (running, shoving, pushing, etc.).
- **Refreshments** – No gum, food or drinks are allowed except when authorized by the directors.
- **Litter** – All trash (paper, broken reeds/drum sticks, etc.) is to be deposited in the wastebaskets provided.
- **Practice & Ensemble Rooms** – Are designed for rehearsing and practicing, NOT social gatherings.
- **Instrument Storage Room** – Is designed for storing musical equipment, NOT for social gatherings.
- **Band Hall Office** – Is for director's use only. Student's should KNOCK first and wait to be invited in; otherwise, it is off-limits.

*Students will be successful when they live within these expectations. When problems arise, they can almost always be traced back to not following a procedure. We will follow the Shotwell Academy Middle School and Aldine ISD discipline plans. Again, these rules are important to the success and well being of our band students as well as for the protection of the band hall and the materials within. We expect our band students to follow these guidelines and also help us enforce them.*

# Expectations:

## Behavior

All students are to conduct themselves properly at all times. Displays of temper, profanity, flagrant violation of rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Any behavior which is not conducive to good citizenship or which violates the Aldine ISD Student Code of Conduct may result in suspension from participating in the extracurricular/incentive activities of the organization, or dismissal from the organization altogether.

## Rehearsals

Band students must be organized and prepared for EVERY rehearsal. When an individual is not able to play his/her instrument during a rehearsal, it hurts the group as well as the individual. It is important that the student's instrument is in good working condition, that he/she has a pencil to mark music, and he/she has all necessary materials and accessories (band binder, music, reeds, oil, etc) for EVERY rehearsal.

## Master Classes

Members of the **Honors and Symphonic Bands** must attend **ALL** Master Classes scheduled. Master Classes will be held before or after school once a week. **Specific days will be posted on our website.**

Master Classes are a curricular extension of the instruction in Honors and Symphonic Band classes. We work together with our athletic department and all other sponsors at Shotwell. We are extremely proud that our members are also vital parts of other organizations and we try to avoid as many conflicts as possible. If a conflict does occur, the directors/sponsors of both groups will work with the student and parents so that the student's and the group's best interests are met. Athletes are allowed to miss 1 day of practice to attend their Master Class. We have a set schedule; however, these days are subject to change depending on scheduling conflicts. **There is an activity bus that can take band students home, if needed for those who are already bus riders.**

## After School Dismissal

All students will remain in their last period class until their mode of transportation is released. Once they are released then each student will pick up their instrument from the band hall and exit the building or report to their designated after school program.

## Practicing

All members of our band program will put forth the effort and time necessary in practicing their instrument in order to be successful. **Instrument goes home EVERY day!** Spend a minimum of 30 minutes a day working through skills/music/exercises introduced in rehearsal and Master Classes. It is recommended to break up the time into *two* 15 minute sessions or *three* 10 minute sessions. Students will not progress as needed by playing once every 24 hours. Students must break up the 23 hours we do not see them with practice. Here is a simple practice outline:

- Fundamentals – long tones, flexibility, flow studies (5 mins.)
- Scales – scales and rhythm exercises (5+ mins.)
- Music – new and previously learned (20+ mins.)

## Fundraising

All members of our band program are expected to participate in our fundraising events. All funds raised go towards maintaining the program, clinicians, food and most importantly our buses. Students who do not participate in fundraising will not be invited to events that utilize these funds. This will include our incentive field trips.

# Procedures:

## Daily

- Enter the band hall quietly and ready to rehearse.
- Be in your assigned seat with your instrument assembled, music, necessary supplies and ready to play:
  - Honors Band - must be ready when the tardy bell rings.
  - All other BANDS – no later than 1 minute after the tardy bell rings.
- Look up at the board for today's agenda, written warm-up, and/or notices.
- Rehearsal begins.
- Director will end rehearsal.
- Large instruments (bassoon, bass clarinet, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, tenor & bari saxes) will be dismissed first. Percussion will organize percussion area and equipment. Smaller instruments (oboe, flute, clarinet, alto sax, & trumpet) will disassemble and REMAIN in their seat till dismissed by a director.
- Leave band hall quietly.

## Purchasing Supplies/Music

All purchases need to be made at the beginning of the school day or at the end of school. *The instructional day is not the time for these transactions.*

## Turning in Paperwork/Permission Slips/Event Notices/Money

- The majority of permission slips and event notices will be submitted electronically through Remind and our website.
- All full sheet paperwork will be picked up during class.
- All permission slips/notices will be placed in "COLLECTION BOX" (black mailbox).  
**All money must be CASH.** The district does not accept checks.
- All money must be turned in at the beginning of the day and needs to be sealed in an envelope or stapled in a Douglas "deposit bag" (provided by the band program) with the following information:
  1. Student name
  2. Amount
  3. Purpose of money

## Parent Communication

- The majority of our communication to parents will be done through [Talking Points](#)
- E-mails
- Handouts
- Director phone calls

# MANDATORY PERFORMANCES

## *Band is a performance class!*

**PERFORMANCES:** All members of a performing band (Honors & Symphonic) are required to perform at all scheduled concerts and/or contests. Parents will be notified of performance dates well in advance. All dates will be posted on our band calendar located on our band website. Parents and students are expected to adjust their schedules to these events. If a student misses a required performance, a parent-teacher conference must be scheduled to discuss the absence. **We expect 100% participation at all performances. Missing a performance will result in a failing grade.** Please check the Band Calendar located on the website. Good behavior in public is most important. All rehearsal regulations are in effect during public performances.

- **CONCERT BAND PERFORMANCES:** All members of Concert are required to perform at the following concerts: Winter Concert, AISD Solo & Ensemble and Spring Concert. All other performance opportunities are by INVITATION ONLY. Invitations will be **earned** on knowledge of music, behavior in rehearsals/class, and eligibility.
- **BEGINNER BAND (1<sup>st</sup> year) PERFORMANCES:** All members of Beginner Band will perform at the Beginner Band Showcase, Spring Concert, and AISD Solo & Ensemble.

# MAJOR CONTESTS

The University Interscholastic League (UIL) sets rules and regulations that we must follow in order to compete in these contests. We expect 100% of our members to be eligible for these events. The music contests we will be entering are:

**TMEA Region Band Auditions:** Check [www.shotwellsharkband.com](http://www.shotwellsharkband.com)

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors Band members are required to audition to remain eligible for Honors Band.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors Band and ALL Symphonic Band members are expected to be prepared to audition;
  - Those who audition will secure their placement or become eligible for promotion.

**UIL Concert and Sight Reading Assessment:** Check [www.shotwellsharkband.com](http://www.shotwellsharkband.com)

- **This is our State Assessment (our STAAR).**
- All students in Honors and Symphonic Band will participate regardless of eligibility.

**AISD Solo & Ensemble Contest:** Check [www.shotwellsharkband.com](http://www.shotwellsharkband.com)

- All students are required to participate in this district event. Every student will be given a solo. Plus, students will be grouped in small and/or medium ensembles.
- All students will participate regardless of eligibility.
  - HOWEVER, if you are ineligible (69 or below in ANY course) you will only receive comments and will not earn a rating or medal.

# Materials for Band:

Each band student must have the following materials for every rehearsal:

- Positive Attitude (not really “material,” but extremely important)
- BLACK Binder
  - 1” or 1.5” - 3 ring hard cover binder with pockets w/ clear front slip cover
- Pencil with eraser (mechanical pencils are great - they are always sharp!)
  - We will use a pencil everyday. Band is a “pencil course” and pens are not used.
- Clear Page Protectors (40 or more)
  - Not all handouts/music will be hole-punched.
- Set of 5 Dividers
  - 1) Daily Drills Packet 2) JSO’s 3) Music 4) Written Notes 5) Master Class Handouts
- Notebook Paper
  - Wide-ruled
- Music
  - All music will be provided for students.
- Instrument
  - Individual instrument lists are located on the website (mouthpiece, reeds, oil, etc.)
- Daily Drills Packet
  - Provided by director – replacements must be downloaded from [www.shotwellsharkband.com](http://www.shotwellsharkband.com).
- Metronome
  - This could be a mobile app. We recommend Tonal Energy (approx. \$4.00)
- Music Stand
  - We use music stands every day in class. Students should have one at home so they are practicing with proper posture and proper instrument carriage.

# Music Companies:

Music supplies and repairs can be provided by the following companies:

**Music & Arts Center** – 22513 TX-249 #101, Houston, TX 77070  
Phone: (713)996-7993, [www.musicarts.com](http://www.musicarts.com)

**H&H Music** – 713 FM 1960 West, Houston, TX 77090  
Phone: (281)580-8000, [www.hhmusic.com](http://www.hhmusic.com)

**Best Band Repair** (instrumental repairs only) – 11115 Mill Rd. Ste. 105, Cypress TX 77429  
Phone: (832)286-8388, <http://www.bestbandrepair.com/>

# Uniforms:

The band uniform is to be supplied by each band student. We will have **TWO** main uniforms for performing groups and **ONE** uniform for beginners that will be used throughout the school year.

## **Beginner Uniform: Beginner Band Members**

- Green Band T-Shirt - purchased through the band hall office
- BLUE Jeans – school approved: Not black, not “skinny” jean style, no holes
- Belt – school approved
- Shoes – school approved

## **Casual Uniform: Honors, Symphonic and Concert Band Members**

- Green Band T-Shirt – will be purchased through the band office
- BLUE Jeans – school approved: Not black, not “skinny” jean style, no holes
- Belt – school approved
- Shoes – school approved

## **Formal Uniform: Honors, Symphonic and Concert Band Members**

- The band will provide which will need to be fitted
- Solid **BLACK** belt – belt buckle is to be of a formal dress style
- Solid **BLACK** full-length socks – not hose or stockings – skin should not be seen when seated
- Solid **BLACK** dress shoes – not tennis shoes

Uniforms should be worn with shirt tails tucked in so the belt can be seen. Pants should be worn securely on the waist and above the hips. ***“Saggy” pants are not acceptable!***

***Students who come to a performance wearing anything other than the correct uniform will receive a "50" for their uniform grade. Depending on the severity of the uniform violation, a student may/will be suspended from participating in the event/performance.***

# Shotwell Band Grades:

## **MAJOR GRADES** (worth 60% of the band grade):

- Master Classes – attendance and assignments given during this time
- Performance Tests – musical knowledge demonstration
- Written Tests – musical knowledge assessments
- All Performances – pep rallies, concerts and contests
- Uniform Grades – proper attire

## **DAILY GRADES** (worth 40% of the band grade):

- Class Grade – weekly grade based on daily demonstration of Essential Agreements
- Performing Class Grade – Performance checks

## **GRADING SCALE:**

- Any grade below an 80 is unacceptable
  - o The student is not making progress on their instrument or meeting the expectations required

# **BAND REALIGNMENT & REASSESSMENT**

**The Director of Bands, Mr. Cano, has the authority to change student schedules.**

- At the end of each semester we will re-evaluate each student to determine whether realignment is necessary.
- Realignment may occur in order to “balance” each performing ensemble.
- Students, who perform at a level (performance, behavior, and eligibility) that warrants that student being re-assigned to a higher band, may have that opportunity awarded to them at the DIRECTOR’S DISCRETION.
- Students who perform at a level unacceptable to the band that they are in (performance, behavior, and eligibility), may be re-assigned to a lower band based on the DIRECTOR’S DISCRETION.
- STUDENT BAND REASSIGNMENTS will also be based on the availability of the student schedule being changed. If a student is reassigned, this will alter the student’s course schedule.

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Band students must adhere to the new Aldine ISD cell phone policy.

The following bullets are key points within the new policy that pertain to the band program:

- Cell phones must be turned off and cannot be visible on campus during the school day.
- The campus includes loading and unloading areas for cars and buses, in the building, or on campus grounds.
- The school day includes, but is not limited to, before or after school, class time, passing periods, lunch periods, after school detention or tutorials, during emergency drills, *practices for extracurricular events and field trips.*
- Placing a cell phone on vibrate or texting is not considered off and is prohibited.
- Using a cell phone to record or video tape is prohibited.

*(Cell phones cannot be visible during performances)*

**NO STUDENT WILL HAVE A CELL PHONE IN THEIR POSSESSION DURING THE UIL CONCERT & SIGHT READING CONTEST PROCESS.**

## **DISCIPLINE CONTRACTS**

A band student may be placed on a written discipline contract for failure to meet any or all of the obligations set forth for their band as well as for disciplinary problems. Failure to meet the terms of the contract will result in the band member being excluded from attending band-activities. This includes going on the band field trips throughout the school year. Only students who adhere to the rules, regulations, and obligations set forth for the band will be rewarded with special privileges. This discipline contract will be signed by the student, a parent, the director, and a principal.

# Parent Responsibility Policy:

Parents must make sure they are receiving notices through **Talking Points**.

Our band attends several events and activities that require us to travel to various locations. It is the parents' responsibility to have their child at the school, or designated location, on time. It is just as imperative that you, the parent, pick up your child at the designated time. You will receive all information of events well in advance of the activity. We understand delays may occur. **However, if you are over 30 minutes past the designated pick-up time, a parent-teacher conference will be set up to discuss future travel arrangements.**

If you need to discuss anything concerning the progress of your child, please feel free to call us at Shotwell. Mr. Cano and Mr. Portillo may be reached at the following:

**Campus Phone: 281-878-0960**

**Email address: [rcano@aldineisd.org](mailto:rcano@aldineisd.org)  
or [laportillo@aldineisd.org](mailto:laportillo@aldineisd.org)**

**Website: [www.shotwellsharkband.com](http://www.shotwellsharkband.com)**

