

READY FOR BAND

GUIDELINES & PROTOCOLS FOR A SAFE RETURN TO THE BAND ROOM



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INTRODUCTION

The Mountain Home Band Program will continually review, follow, and operate under all guidelines, protocols, and mandates set forth by the Arkansas Department of Health, CDC, Arkansas Department of Education, state and local officials, as well as Mountain Home Public Schools. We will observe the most recent “best practices” & requirements for students to return to safely participating in our band program.

There has also been extensive research and scientific instrument aerosol studies related to the band idiom initiated by leading national music organizations. The Arkansas School Band & Orchestra Association (ASBOA), the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS), and Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) all helped play a role in recommendations to state officials concerning the safe return to music education.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT BAND...

- Is part of a well-rounded education for all students as understood and supported by federal and state policymakers
- Helps develop language skills
- Provides a sense of achievement/ Self-esteem
- Keeps students engaged in school
- Develops Creativity / Intellectual Curiosity
- Promotes teamwork / Collaboration / Problem solving
- Improves Math skills / Pattern recognition



PROMOTING BEHAVIORS THAT REDUCE SPREAD

It will be necessary that all educators proactively participate in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Following the CDC's Considerations for Schools, our program can actively promote behaviors that reduce spread by:

ENCOURAGE

Encouraging students to stay home when appropriate.

ETIQUETTE

Using proper respiratory etiquette by covering sneezes and coughs as well as maintaining superior hand hygiene.

COVERINGS

Wearing cloth face coverings as much as possible in public. This will be most essential in times when physical distancing is not possible.

CLEANING

Ensuring we are adequately stocked with cleaning supplies, including instrument-safe isopropyl alcohol, instrument sanitizing spray, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, soap, paper towels and tissues.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Maintain minimum physical distancing of 6 feet between participants at all times.
- Musicians, Directors, and All Staff must be screened prior to any activity by asking the following questions and excluded if the answer is yes:
 - Have had a fever of 100.4 degrees in the last 2 days
 - Have a cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle aches (myalgias), sore throat, headache, recent loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
 - Had contact with a person known to be infected with Covid-19 within the previous 14 days
- In addition, Directors and All Staff must have temperature checked by digital thermometer prior to entry, and those whose temperature is 100.4 degrees must be excluded.

BAND ALSO...

- Helps support emotional & social well-being (more important now than ever!!)
- Nurtures the creation of a welcoming school environment where students can express themselves in a safe, positive way, performing independently, in small or large groups
- Teaches students a skill of learning an instrument & appreciation for the arts & love of music
- Provides a FUN experience for students!!



BAND ROOM POLICIES

Establishing set schedules and expectations will be of utmost importance to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as we return to the band room. We will be implementing the following procedures within the band classroom at each of our campuses:

- Students should wear a **face covering** (mask) upon entering the band room. The face covering must completely cover the nose and mouth. The district is providing two (2) masks for each student to use. **The band will provide each student with a mask with an opening to allow for the mouthpiece to play.** Students/parents are responsible for washing these or other face coverings on a regular basis.
- Per the researched guidelines, **chairs** will be set up in straight rows at least **six (6) feet apart** from one another. Students will sit in an assigned seating chart (same seat each day).
- **Cloth bell coverings** secured with an elastic band (also recommended through updated research) will be provided to each student to place over the bell of their instrument (except flutes). **Students/parents are responsible for washing** these on a regular basis like the masks. Please keep up with these and have them at all times for your instrument.
- **Doors will be opened** at the beginning and end of each class to ensure students will not need to touch the door knobs or handles.
- **Students will enter** through an assigned door, collect their instrument, and go directly to their seat to prevent unnecessary contact or movement throughout the classroom.
- Students will be encouraged to **social distance** as much as physically possible when moving around the room. Each campus will work on a **“traffic flow”** for entering & exiting the room, getting your instrument, etc.
- **Avoid personal contact** at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, high-fives, hand shaking, and fist bumping.



BAND ROOM POLICIES CONTINUED

- Prior to taking their instruments out of the case and again at the conclusion of class, students are encouraged to **wash or disinfect their hands using soap and water or an alcohol based sanitizer** (it is recommended that students have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer in addition to what will be provided by the school).
- A puppy training pad (or similar absorbent pad) will be provided **DAILY for ALL brass players**. Students need to obtain one of these upon entering the room and **MUST empty all water keys on to the pad** (even outside). Each student is responsible for folding the pad in half with the plastic layer on the outside, and properly placing it in the trash can.
- Students will **refrain from sharing classroom materials**, such as valve oil, pencils, instruments or other supplies. Valve oil needs to be purchased by the student and we will have individual bottles of valve oil available for use for those that need them.
- **Students will be provided with their own personal copies** of music, method books, and other pertinent classroom materials. Please keep up with your music. **Music will also be posted online** when possible and within copyright laws.
- Students **will not touch or move other students' instruments**, mouthpiece, or case at any time.
- Students will **spray their mouthpiece** with Steri-Spray (provided by the band department) at the start of each practice rehearsal or performance, and again, prior to placing the instrument in the case.
- **Students will be encouraged to provide their own supplies as they are able**. When this is not feasible, shared equipment such as mallets, cymbals, or other percussion equipment will be disinfected prior to another student using the same piece of equipment. **All percussionists are encouraged to use their own stick bag**, drum sticks, keyboard, and timpani mallets. Please mark your bag, sticks, mallets, etc. with your first & last name.
- **Frequently touched objects** in our classroom, including music stands, door knobs, switches, keyboards, faucets, and other applicable objects **will be disinfected** appropriately according to their frequency of use and according to CDC and district guidelines.
- Playing outdoors for woodwind and brass is preferred at this time, but **indoor playing is allowed if 6 foot distancing can be maintained**. There is a maximum **playing time of 30 minutes with a 20 minute break** to allow for room air exchange.
- We are working to secure **large tents** to place outside by the band rooms to allow protection when we're outside playing.

DISINFECTING BAND INSTRUMENTS

Maintaining a clean musical instrument that is frequently disinfected will be a primary point of emphasis for the foreseeable future. While each instrument is unique, students should be aware of instrument cleaning procedures and policies as it relates to their instruments.

- ALL school provided instruments (french horns, baritones, tubas, or their marching equivalent) have been professionally cleaned & sterilized before being issued to students for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Students should wash their hands or use an alcohol-based sanitizer before handling their instrument, case, or mouthpiece as well as at the conclusion of playing their instrument.
- Students should refrain from handling the instruments, case, or mouthpiece of another student.

Students should clean the instrument, neck, and mouthpiece as recommended by NAFME's Instrument Cleaning Guidelines

<https://nafme.org/covid-19-instrument-cleaning-guidelines/>

As mentioned previously, a sanitary spray designed for mouthpieces will be provided to all band students. Students are highly encouraged to follow the NAFME guidelines for cleaning their mouthpiece on a regular basis. Brass players are encouraged to keep their leadpipe clean and free of dirt and debris.

DISINFECTING

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

Special considerations should be given to percussion equipment, as some equipment may be shared by multiple students, classes and ensembles. The following procedures will be utilized as it relates to percussion equipment, as established in *Managing COVID-19 Protocols in Administering Percussion Performance Curriculum* from the Percussive Arts Society COVID-19 Task Force.

- Students should provide their own implements when appropriate, such as sticks, mallets, bags, and other equipment to avoid sharing among students.
- In a rehearsal or performance setting, students should not share implements within a single piece. Rather considerations should be given to minimize students swapping instruments during a rehearsal and to ensure adequate time is given to disinfect shared percussion equipment.
- Common household cleaners, such as Clorox and Lysol can be used on synthetic and metal surfaces, such as hardware, metal rims, and frames. However, these products should be avoided on natural surfaces such as rosewood and calfskin heads.
- Because percussionists can comfortably wear a face mask while practicing or performing, face masks will be worn by percussion students while practicing and performing in compliance with our local or school policies, as applicable.

TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

- If we're allowed to travel, we will follow all district protocols related to bus transportation including, but not limited to, wearing of face coverings, assigned seating at appropriate distance on the bus, hand sanitizing, etc.
- Students will load & unload their own equipment, instrument, and/or luggage.
- No food or drink on the bus; Personal WATER bottles will be allowed--absolutely NO sharing of water.
- For meal service (per our normal operandum), hand sanitizer will be provided for students before a meal is served. Band parents will wear face coverings and approved gloves to serve food. Food will be professionally prepared & pre-wrapped. No sharing of food or drink between students is allowed at any time. Per normal, students need to throw away all of their trash once they've finished eating.

PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

For performances, competitions, and other music events held in a facility, the facility hosting the event must follow the current Directive for Large Outdoor Venues or Large Indoor Venues (when playing woodwind & brass is allowed to be moved indoors). Spectators are covered under these Directives.

FUNDRAISING CONSIDERATIONS

- Fundraising has been approved by each school principal.
- Student participation is optional, but encouraged. Students will need to have permission from their parents to participate
- We need to continue to raise money for our band program to continue to function, but want to provide the safest, easiest way to accomplish this goal.
- This year we will participate in a fund raising activity that will include:
 - Students will be provided a full color brochure with the product and information to begin their sales. We will share a video with students on how to set-up and execute the sale.
 - We will be doing online ordering only. Each student will have their own "dashboard" for sales. Customers can place orders online.
 - Payment will be online only. Students will not be collecting or handling any money throughout the sale. Students can track their progress on their individual dashboard.
 - Products will be mailed directly to the customer's address. There will be no delivery or pick-up required at school. This is literally a "hands-off" fundraiser. There is a small fee for shipping.

Band Instruction at School

[PLAYING OF WOODWIND & BRASS OUTSIDE]



- 6th grade beginning band students are in “like instrument” classes and will learn how to assemble and play their instrument. They will be provided a beginning band method book to assist in this process with their band teacher. They will also be taught how to properly clean and maintain their instrument.
- 7th - 12th grade students will be provided method books, music, or other relevant materials based upon their grade level, ability, and band performance schedule.
- Our plan is to continue to prepare for our regular performance schedule(s) of parades, games, and concerts- obviously this is all subject to change based upon current guidelines for social distancing, numbers allowed to attend games at the stadium, Dunbar Auditorium for concerts, etc.

- We are also making additional plans to have smaller groups perform such as woodwind, brass, and percussion ensembles at each grade level and/or even smaller ensembles (5-10 students per group). There is a wide variety of fun, educational, entertaining, and worthwhile music that will allow public performances with these smaller groups and/or allow these groups to be featured on social media throughout the year.
- We may adjust some of our typical indoor performances (such as band concerts), and create new performance opportunities in an outdoor setting.
- We are going to be as creative and resourceful as possible to allow our students to showcase their musical talents throughout the school year!!



"Virtual" Band at Home

- Band instruction will continue as normal through Canvas (the new online instructional platform replacing Google Classroom throughout the district). There is also an app for students and parents to use for Canvas.
- Band students will attend online instructional classes with their band director to continue to work in the method book, work on band music, ensemble music, and other appropriate band lessons. This is also a way that students can continue to socially interact with their teacher and other band members, even from home.
- The band department will be purchasing a license to "Smart Music" for each student, as needed per grade level and music being taught. All of the band method books and a majority of our band and ensemble music will be available in this online program. Students can view the music, hear the music, play along with the music, and submit their own recordings to be assessed by their band director. It is a fun, engaging way to make music. This platform can be used for online band (with or without a director), but can also be used for instruction when we're at school.
- If students are at home for an extended period of time, we will find creative ways to perform. This may include band or ensemble performances pre-recorded at school and released on social media at appropriate times throughout the year or through "virtual ensemble performances."
- Our goal is to continue to provide all of the benefits of band to our students, allow them to socially interact with each other, and continue the rich tradition and history of our band program, whether at school, at home, or a combination of both.



Marching Band Considerations

[HIGH SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH]

- There will be no provided water coolers of any kind; students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. They are installing water stations at each campus (no water fountains). NO sharing of water is allowed by students at any time.
- Mallet / front ensemble players must move their individual equipment.
- Electronics - sound board only operated by a band director.
- Guard members must set & pick up their own equipment for all rehearsals & performances.
- Drum major podiums - moved by individual drum majors; for performances, it is suggested these moved by family members of drum majors.
- Drill spacing (parade spacing for junior high) will comply with distance requirements between students.
- No sharing of music folders - each student (per normal operating procedures) should have their own folder of music, flip folder, and lyre at high school and junior high.
- UDB app for drill or physical copies of drill coordinate sheets- students will use their own personal cell phone device.
- Marching chips - these will be assigned individually to high school students (ziploc bags) - students responsible for keeping up with these for daily rehearsals.
- All band students are reminded to wear sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, and appropriate clothing for any outdoor rehearsals on campus, at the stadium, or junior high parking lot. Please stay hydrated.
- Per the gameday guidelines, band members will not be allowed to go to the concession stand. We will make arrangements to have concessions available for purchase by the band seating area.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & LINKS

CLICK TO VIEW

Mountain Home School District “Ready for Learning” Plan

Arkansas Department of Education “Healthy Schools” Guide

**Arkansas Department of Health website
“Return to Play” Directive**

Aerosol Study Part I

Aerosol Study Part II

Band Gameday Guidelines