

MCPS Fine Arts

Big Sky High School Bands



Student/Parent Band Handbook 2020-2021



Work hard. Be kind.

Big Sky High School
Missoula County Public Schools
3100 S. Avenue West , Missoula, MT 59804

Welcome to the Big Sky Band Family!

Teacher-conductor: Jesse Dochnahl
Email: jedochnahl@mcpsmt.org

Office Phone: 406.728.2400 x8035
Website: www.mcpsmt.org/Domain/3058

First, CONGRATULATIONS on your decision to commit to something very special with so many amazing students; a tradition of excellence with the band.

Carefully read the following information about band studies at Big Sky High School. This is a guide for parents and students to give specific details about the band program. Use the handbook as a reference to help answer questions throughout the school year. When you are finished, please complete the required [online questionnaire](#) and turn in fees by **Friday, September 11**. See the checklist below.

Thank you for the opportunity to help you grow as a musician and a beautiful person. Welcome to the Big Sky band family!

– Mr. Jesse Dochnahl, your band teacher-conductor

Our Mission - to provide students a comprehensive music education through performance, to facilitate a lifelong desire for personal and shared discovery, and to awaken the supreme joy in performing music with a deeper understanding.

Checklist for starting the year

- ☐ Your instrument in excellent playing condition with all necessary accessories
- ☐ Pencils - keep at least two ready to go for rehearsal
- ☐ Folders, music and method books provided by the band program. Take great care.
- ☐ Label all items please. A nametag on your case is required and a smart move.
- ☐ Read and review this Band Handbook and the [Events Schedule](#). Keep tabs throughout the year.
- ☐ Complete the [online questionnaire](#)
- ☐ Band Supply/Maintenance Fee - \$30.00 (payable to Big Sky Bands)
- ☐ [Instrument Rental Fee](#) - \$75.00 for the school year for students who need to rent an instrument
- ☐ Turn in the [MCPS Percussion Policy](#) and \$30 percussion fee (percussionists only)
- ☐ PARENTS, our first Band Parent virtual-meeting is TBD. Keep an eye out for ways to help our kids!

BAND CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

CONCERT BAND/Intermediate (MU0400) (Not available 2020-2019) - Is made up of students who are entering high school and who have had three to four years of band experience. Students learn and practice the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to perform at a high level.

SYMPHONIC BAND/Advanced (MU0300) - Is made up of Juniors, Sophomores and Advanced Placement Freshmen. Students refine and practice the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to perform and a higher level.

WIND ENSEMBLE (MU0100) - Is the most Advanced Placement band. Students must demonstrate high levels of musicianship.

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE (MU1450-1) - (grades 9-12) Explore and develop all areas and styles of percussion music, including marching, drumline, concert and percussion ensemble.

JAZZ BAND (MU0200) - Is an Auditioned performance group that studies jazz styles, improvisation, theory, history, and composition. Students in this ensemble are required to be in a Big Sky band or orchestra.

JAZZ BAND 2 (MU0200-2) - Is a Zero Period performance class for newer jazz students that introduces jazz styles, improvisation, theory, history, and composition. Students in this ensemble are required to be in a Big Sky concert band or orchestra.

PEP BAND (grades 9-12) - This auditioned group represents the fun side of musical craziness! The pep band plays for a majority of home basketball games. All students enrolled in a band are strongly encouraged to participate in the Pep Band. Pep band membership is an important element in qualifying for a Band Letter and extra Musicianship Points. Students who make the commitment to play in the pep band must participate throughout the season and attend all performances. Travel for state tournaments based on attendance. Pep Band Schedule is posted in November.

~~MARCHING BAND (grades 9-12)~~ - This combined group is made up of Concert Band, Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble members. Marching Band is part of the required curriculum; grades are assigned and attendance required for all rehearsals and performances. Marching band starts at the beginning of school and lasts approximately five weeks. We rehearse during our class periods and hit the field as a full group before shows and UM Homecoming Parade. Non-marching members are expected to participate by playing, learning marching fundamentals, filling in for missing people, and helping with equipment and other logistics. Waivers are available for students who have a direct conflict with specific performances because of involvement in fall sports and cheerleading. Any student seeking a waiver of participation for marching band must notify Mr. Dochnahl in writing. Thank you.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Students are assessed in five basic categories for each grading period:

- Participation (daily assessment of Ensemble Skills rubric; 5 points per day)
- Band Performances & Concerts (100-200 points per concert)
- Play Challenges/Tests (points vary)

Written Evaluations & Assignments (points vary)
Musicianship Points (points vary this year)

These grading categories are aligned with the [Band Assessment Standards](#) and our Band Goals, printed below. I will work as hard as I can to help every student achieve success and grow as well-rounded musicians and people. Details about each grading category are printed below.

Four Goals for the Big Sky Band Student

- ★ to perform at the best of our ability
- ★ to expand the knowledge and appreciation of all music
- ★ to promote music participation in our community
- ★ to promote positive and supportive relationships among all band members

Classroom Support for Remote Learning

We will be using Google Classroom in this class. Check daily for announcements, assignments and help.
Google Classroom Links: (available Monday, August 24)

Band Classroom/Rehearsal Expectations

The Eagle Bands are one of the most visible and active organizations at school and in the Missoula area. Be mindful that our daily behaviors and attitudes—individually and collectively—are a direct reflection of the community, the school and our band family. These are common sense things you must do in order to be excellent!

1. Work hard, be kind. Smile & remain encouraging to everyone around you.
2. Be respectful. Treat everyone the way you want to be treated.
3. Be responsible. Follow directions the first time they are given. This simple, straightforward rule allows us to work efficiently. Follow the highest standards of the [Ensemble Skills Rubric](#).
4. Be safe.
5. Take great care and proud ownership of our great facilities.
6. Cell phones are tools to be used at appropriate times. If you have a legitimate reason to use your cell phone, ask first. Otherwise, they will be removed with consequences.

How to make up points if I am absent

1. Schedule an outside 15-minute lesson with Mr. Dochnahl for each absence.
2. Practice an additional hour per week on your own and fill out your practice journal. Show Mr. D.
3. Athletics/Other school events – If you are going to miss a class due to a school activity let me know far in advance with an appropriate note or absence form.

Band Performance/Concert Guidelines

Concerts and performances are an extension of the band class and the learning that takes place every day. Music was created to be shared and not performed in isolation (or in the band room only). For this reason, we need to perform for an audience in order to share the wealth of learning that has taken place. This sharing helps the students to bring closure to the learning process and also propels them towards the next step. Student participation in concerts is vital to the success of all the students involved. Please make every effort to have your child be a part of these experiences. Sporting events/practices, work, and other extracurricular activities are not acceptable reasons to miss a

performance. If you have a reason to miss any performance, please contact Mr. Dochnahl as soon as possible prior to the concert date.

- Students are to arrive 30 minutes before the concert starts for warm-up & tuning, unless otherwise noted on the performance calendar.
- Failure to attend a concert results in a zero for that grade—unexcused absences are not tolerated. *All absences* require a make-up assignment for credit.
- Concert Etiquette: Students and Parents/Guardians will remain for the entire concert. Audiences will be quiet and respectful during the performance. Share your appreciation for the students' hard work with enthusiastic listening and applause!
- Following every performance students are required to stack chairs and rack stands before leaving. All percussionists are required to move all equipment back to the band room before leaving.

Play Challenges/Tests

In order to perform at the best of our ability, play challenges (tests) will be used to assess and cultivate student progress. Challenges are completed with Mr. Dochnahl before/after school, lunch, or submitted electronically via Google Classroom. It is up to the student to complete the required challenges by the end of each quarter. The testing requirements will be posted in Google Classroom.

Musicianship Points - becoming a well-rounded musician

Students are expected to earn Musicianship Points (MPs) each grading period. This year total points will vary. Students practice responsibility by tracking their own progress using the [score sheet](#). MPs are submitted at the end of every grading period and calculated for a grade.

Our goal is to nurture comprehensive musicianship in every student: skills, knowledge and affect. As an assessment, Musicianship Points require students to actively explore various aspects of music by emphasizing different projects and assignments. If you think of a new project idea, please submit it to Mr. Dochnahl.

*Assignments, rubrics, and online forms are located in the classroom or on the [band website](#).

Practice! Duh.

As a member of the Big Sky Bands you are expected to demonstrate proficiency and progress on your instrument. **This will require individual practice time outside of class.** Students are expected to practice as much as necessary to be prepared for class, play tests, and performances. [Practice records](#) are used to document quality practice time and will earn 8 Musicianship Points for each hour.

Practice Tips

Practice is essential in the growth and development of every musician (student, athlete, etc.). It requires goal setting and repetition to build skills and knowledge. More is better, but only if it is SMART, DEEP practice.

1. **Perform** a short section of your piece straight through. Make mental notes of each error or stop and mark them down. Do not repeat your errors!
2. **Isolate problems.** Most mistakes are in only one or two measure units.
3. **Analyze the problem.** Know what caused the problem. Rhythm, note accuracy, fingering (is there an alternate fingering that will make the passage easier to play?).
4. **Correct the problem.** Practice does not make perfect unless it is perfect practice. Start by playing the group of notes as slowly as necessary, isolate specific issues that are difficult. Each time you are able to play the problem spot correctly, speed it up a little. When you have it at

the desired tempo put it back into the context of the piece and try it again. If your practice was successful it should now feel easy to play. Create the “Aha!” moment.

5. **Perform** the same section again. Concentrate on not making any of the mistakes you corrected.
6. **Practice expressively!** Use the “Play this phrase as if...” strategy for imaginative, creative, and expressive practice.
7. [Practice Resources](#) on our website

Private Lessons - PLEASE!

One of the best ways for students to grow as young musicians and to develop a deeper appreciation for their instrument is through lessons. Each instrument requires a very different set of skills and the best way to master these is help from a private instructor. Lessons are a wonderful investment that will enhance student learning in all areas. Please consider contacting a private teacher to get started now!

Flute

Dr. Jen Cooper - jcooperflute@gmail.com
Kirsten McGlynn - 406-270-0108

Oboe

Susi Stipich - sstipich@hotmail.com

Clarinet

Chris Kirkpatrick - 406-243-6889
Chuck Florence - 406-251-8494

Saxophone

Chuck and Brook Florence -
Saxophones2@msn.com
[Dylan Dwyer](#) - dylandbriandwyer@gmail.com

Bassoon

Alicia McLean - basunist@msn.com

French Horn

Zachary Cooper -
zachary.cooper@mso.umt.edu

Trombone

Rob Tapper - Rob.Tapper@mso.umt.edu
Naomi Moon Siegel – [naomi.siegel@gmail.com](#)
Lexi Vine - xiaosang05@gmail.com

Trumpet

Brendan McGlynn - bmcg97@gmail.com
John Driscoll - 406-880-0684
Nick Barr - nickbarr96@gmail.com

Euphonium/Tuba

Ben Kirby - 406-728-0338
Kyle Gillett - 406-240-6548
Lexi Vine - xiaosang05@gmail.com (euph)

Percussion

Jeff Brandt - 406-830-0147
Rich Brinkman - (406) 549-5269
Ed Stalling - [edstalling@yahoo.com](#)
Lexi Vine - xiaosang05@gmail.com

Improvisation/Jazz

Naomi Moon Siegel – [naomi.siegel@gmail.com](#)
Rob Tapper - Rob.Tapper@mso.umt.edu

Additional Performing Opportunities

Taking part in musical opportunities outside of the school band is another key element in the development of your musical abilities. Here is a partial list of musical events in our community.

- ☐ All-Northwest Honor Band, Auditions due the end of September
- ☐ All-State Honor Band, Auditions in June
- ☐ National Honor Ensemble, Auditions in May
- ☐ WIBC Honor Band, Auditions in October

- ❑ District Music Festival solos and ensembles (in April)
- ❑ Performances in the community
- ❑ Missoula City Band, summer
- ❑ All-City Jazz Combos
- ❑ Music camps

Awards

- ★ Band Letters are awarded to students who are involved above and beyond the requirements of the classroom. This effort is recognized by accumulating points within extra-curricular musical activities. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of points and turn in a [Band Letter Application](#) on May 1.
- ★ The John Philip Sousa Award is given to a senior member of the band who has demonstrated outstanding musical quality, leadership, citizenship, positive attitude and been actively involved in BSHS band groups.
- ★ The Outstanding Big Sky Jazz Award is given to a senior member of the Jazz Band who demonstrated outstanding achievements in the art of jazz as demonstrated through superior musicianship, character, and individual creativity.
- ★ Music Festival certificates are given to those students who have been soloists at District and State Music Festival, or participants in the All-State or All-Northwest groups.

SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTICS

Fees

We try to keep out of pocket fees to a minimum, but occasionally we need to assess fees for the use of school equipment—especially percussion and rentals—to offset certain expenditures (i.e. new uniforms & instrument repairs). *Checks made out to "Big Sky Bands." *Fees are subject to change.

- ✓ Band Maintenance/Supply Fee - \$30.00
- ✓ Percussion Fee – \$30.00 For percussionists only. See [MCPS Percussion Policy form](#)
- ✓ Instrument Rental Fee - \$75.00 for the year, \$30.00 for the summer, for students who need a school instrument: [Rental Contract](#)
- ✓ District and State Music Festival accompanist fees – for rehearsals and performances, determined by the student and their accompanist.

Uniforms

All members of any band at Big Sky will be issued a uniform before our first concert. These uniforms must be treated with respect and worn with pride by all band members. That means neatly hanging each piece up on its hanger and placing the uniform in its garment bag. You must take your uniform home with you the same day it is issued and keep it in perfect condition. Failure to take care of your uniform will result in replacement/repair fees.

Marching Band Uniform

Bib pants, Jacket (same as your concert band jacket), Overlay, Marching Band t-shirt (goes under bib, jacket and overlay), Shako & Plume (stored in uniform closet, plumes always returned to plume cases after performances), Black MTX Marching Shoes, Black socks



Concert and Jazz Uniform (men)

1. Tuxedo Jacket, Marching Shoes and Tuxedo Pants (checked out and sized by Band Parent volunteers)
2. You will need to provide:
 - White “Wingtip” Tux Shirt – You can purchase this at any tux shop or [Amazon](#)
 - Black Socks
 - Black Bow Tie

Concert Uniform (women)

1. All Black Uniform Dress (checked out and sized by Band Parent volunteers)
2. You will need to provide:
 - Black Stockings
 - Black Dress Shoes (you can wear your marching shoes if you choose to)
3. Jazz Bands: Women choose their own black concert attire.



Fundraising

Fundraising is an essential part of providing a quality experience for the band students at BSHS. The money raised allows the band to take trips and is used to supplement money provided by the district to update equipment and supplies. We have four major fundraisers every year, and the money students earn goes to their student band account. This account can be used for travel and registration fees for honor groups ONLY while the student is a member of the Big Sky band program. If a student carries a balance upon graduation, that money will roll over into the general side of the student band fund.

1. Citrus Sale – postponed till spring
2. Coffee Sale - TBD
3. Blue Note Café – February 20, 2021
4. Big Sky Nacho Booth – 2nd week in August

Care for your Instrument

The better you maintain your instrument, the less likely repairs will be needed. If repairs are required, please contact a professional repairman immediately.

Matt Wilson, Music Medics

406.552.0241

333. SW Higgins Ave, Missoula, MT 59803

Hours: Tues-Fri, 9:30am-6pm

Saturday, 10am-2pm

Morgenroth Music Center
800.462.0013
1105 W Sussex, Missoula, MT 59801

Hours: Mon-Fri, 9:30am-6pm
Saturday, 9:30am-5:30pm

Solo and Ensemble Music Festival Guidelines

All students are encouraged to participate in solo and ensemble. Students should start looking for a solo or ensemble to participate in contest by the end of September. Follow the timeline and guidelines to ensure rewarding success.

October 1:

- Have music and ensemble-mates for possible events selected
- Limit your participation to 4-5 events. Overextending yourself can be stressful.

November 1:

- Completed at least three lessons on your music so you know how it should be played.
- Soloists should be spending at least 20 minutes per 5 days a week practicing their solos.
- Ensemble members should be spending 20 minutes per 5 days a week practicing their parts on their own.

December 1:

- Be able to play all the notes and rhythms with accuracy from start to finish.
- Ensembles should rehearse at least one day a week for one hour outside of class.
- Sign up for lessons/coachings with a teacher

January 1:

- Play your solo or ensemble for Mr. Dochnahl to confirm registration
- Ensembles should rehearse at least one day a week for one hour outside of class.
- Contact an accompanist (pianist) for solos
- It is your responsibility to find an accompanist and set up rehearsals.
- We have names and contacts for people that have accompanied students in the past.

February 1:

- Complete at least one rehearsal with your accompanist
- Ensembles should rehearse at least one day a week for one hour outside of class.

March 1:

- Completed at least three rehearsals with your accompanist
- Register your events for District Festival with Mr. Dochnahl.
- Solos and ensembles perform for class and/or in Spring Festival Concert

Parents: Some Helpful Considerations for Student Success in Music

Parents are an integral component of any great band's success. The successful student in any endeavor is almost always backed up by a curious, informed and excited parent. Music is a three-way partnership composed of teacher, student and parent. Each member of the partnership has a responsibility to the others to support, encourage and help.

The [Big Sky Band Parents Organization](#) is an extremely important group for us. This group of band parents works with you and for you to make your music experience here at Big Sky the best. The quality and quantity of band opportunities (trips, equipment, guest teachers, etc.) would not be possible without their support and help. Please contact bigskybandparents@gmail.com to help.

Parent Responsibilities

- Patience regarding their child's growth and the normal process of musical development.
- Encouragement on a weekly basis to spend practice time on their instrument
- Encouragement when the going gets tough. Some musical concepts and skills require intensive and repeated practice. Personal parental support through these trials is necessary to build grit and determination.
- Interest in all that a child is involved with, and praise for their participation in that activity is crucial. Please consider private lessons for your child!
- Imagination in creating an atmosphere at home that is conducive to musical stimulation and growth. Is there a good place in your home that could be designated a practice area?

You've finished reading the band handbook - great!

Now please fill out the [online questionnaire](#).

Thank you for your efforts.

