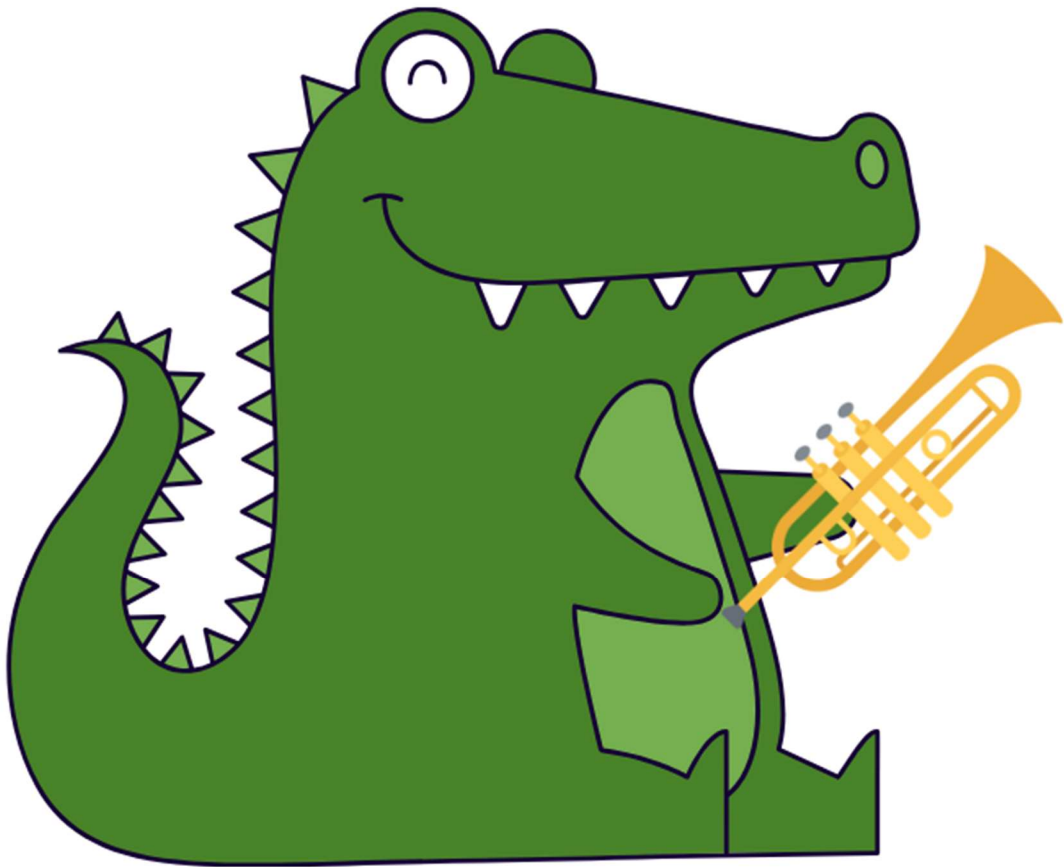


**ALLEGANY-LIMESTONE MHS**  
**BAND HANDBOOK**  
**2024-25**





# Welcome!

My name is Dr. Cyril Bodnar, and it is a pleasure to welcome you (back) to the band program at Allegany-Limestone MHS! The past 3 years have been wonderful as both a teacher and musician, and I'm looking forward to working with you to create beautiful music together.

To all of the incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade class, I cannot tell you how excited I am to work with you this year. Last year, Mrs. Stebbins did a great job of helping you prepare and perform several fantastic concerts during the year. Very little of this is going to change when working with me. We will still have music lessons together and our rehearsals will focus on putting on three excellent concerts this school year. A lot of what is in this handbook are things you should be used to with Mrs. Stebbins, but if anything isn't clear then please don't hesitate to drop into the band room and ask any questions you have!

For my 8-12 students, it's good to have you back! I know how busy your academic career is getting with state testing, other extracurriculars, and college/workforce preparation taking more time in your lives. This year we will be honing the skills we have been working on so far. My hope is we can continue to work hard and play hard together.

Finally, to the parents of all the musicians in the band program: I cannot thank you enough for your continued support of the band program at the Middle and High School. If you're looking to have a more hands-on experience with helping to shape our program, I would invite you to become a member of our Music Boosters. They are responsible for helping our students to participate in musical activities such as solo competitions and festivals, awarding scholarships to students focusing on music as a career after high school, bringing in guest artists and professionals to work with our students, and many, many more things that help our program stand out from other districts. Information on joining our Music Boosters is located at the back of this handbook.

It has never been a better time to become involved as a musician at Allegany-Limestone. If you have any questions about anything listen in this handbook or simply want to discuss any aspects of the music program, please do not hesitate to reach out. My door is always open and I am happy to continue serving the community that has welcomed me so warmly.

Cheers!

Dr. Cyril Bodnar

*Director of Bands, Allegany-Limestone MHS*

*Email: [cbodnar@alcsny.org](mailto:cbodnar@alcsny.org)*

*Phone: (716) 375-6600 ext. 2282*

# Grading Policy

(Or, “How to get an easy A+ in Band”)

It is my firm belief you have to **actively try** to fail this class. Each quarter is broken down into three major categories, each representing a portion of your final grade for the quarter. For each section, a description of how to get full marks will be explained so everybody can aim for an easy A+ on their report cards throughout the year. The three categories are:

*Rehearsal Participation and Concert Performances: 40%*

*Lessons: 40%*

*End of Quarter Assignment/Performance: 20%*

## REHEARSAL PARTICIPATION AND CONCERT PERFORMANCES

Band is one of the only classes that relies on all of its members to assist each other in preparing and presenting an end product. To that extent, you are expected to regularly attend and participate in band rehearsals and concerts. Our ensembles meet during the following times to rehearse during the school week:

**7/8 Band**      4<sup>th</sup> period, B and D days

**HS Band**      9<sup>th</sup> period, every day<sup>1</sup>

### How to get the full 40%

**Musicians are expected to regularly attend band rehearsals.** This hopefully goes without saying, but please do not skip band rehearsal. If you are sick, get well soon and we will see you when you get back to school. If you have to miss band for an excused reason – field trips, bereavement – please let me know as soon as possible BEFORE THE MISSED REHEARSAL so I can mark you accordingly in your grade book. Skipping band means you are getting a zero for that day’s participation.

**Come prepared for each rehearsal.** There are three things you need for each rehearsal: your instrument, your music, and a pencil. Please make sure you practice your music at home. Practice is your form of homework in band. This is so we can use rehearsal time to put our parts together. The more work you do practicing for band outside of rehearsal, the easier it will be to participate and the

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<sup>1</sup> If you are also in HS choir, you come to band every B and D day instead.

higher your grade will be because of it! We are ALL ONE BAND, which means we all have to do our part to make our band sound its best together.

**There is a strict ZERO TOLERANCE cell phone policy in rehearsal.** It's critical for every musician to be participating and focused so the entire band can sound good. Grades 7 and 8, your phone should be in your locker anyways because of the school's phone policy. High schoolers, when rehearsal starts, please put your phones away for the rehearsal. If you have your cell phone out and are using it during rehearsal, it will be taken away and the day's participation will be graded as a zero. At the end of class, it will be returned with a disciplinary referral. Please respect the time and effort your fellow musicians have put into creating music together!

**CONCERT ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.** Concerts, in a way, are public 'tests' meant to showcase the product of hard work each musician has put into rehearsals. In any other class, not doing a test would result in a zero. If you miss a concert for an unexcused reason, your participation grade for the Quarter will be reduced to an automatic zero, meaning the maximum grade you can earn in band for that Quarter is a 60%. The only excused absences from a concert are for personal health-related issues (sickness, quarantine, etc.) or bereavement. In this case, it is yours and your parent/guardian's responsibility to produce a signed note to Dr. Bodnar. We will then come up with an alternative assignment that must be completed to substitute for missing the concert. All other reasons are unexcused and include, but are not limited to: not having a ride to a concert, not having the correct concert attire, forgetfulness, etc. It is up to the final discretion of Dr. Bodnar to determine if a concert absence is excused or unexcused.

## LESSONS

Lessons are an important time where musicians are given private and group instruction to help focus on personal growth. You will be separated into lesson groups based on grade level and instrument. Lesson groups are based on a six-day rotation. Everybody is assigned a lesson group on numbered day (1-6) and will always have a lesson on their numbered day. Your numbered day will follow a rotating schedule where you will attend their lesson during a different weekday and period each week. You will have five weeks in a row where you have a lesson each day of the week during a different period, then have a 'skip' week on week six. Here is an example of a trumpet lesson group's schedule:

### ***7/8 Band Trumpets (Group G) – Day 2 Lesson Schedule***

*Week 1 – Tuesday, Period 1*

*Week 6 – Monday, Period 1*

*Week 2 – Wednesday, Period 2*

*Week 7 – Tuesday, Period 2*

*Week 3 – Thursday, Period 3*

*Week 8 – Wednesday, Period 3*

*Week 4 – Friday, Period 8*

*Week 9 – Thursday, Period 8*

*Week 5 – SKIP WEEK*

*Week 10 – QUARTER FINAL (NO REGULAR LESSONS)*

## How to get the full 40%

**Attend lessons regularly!** This is the easiest way to both ensure a good grade for your lesson or get a zero for your lesson. Lesson schedules are given to everybody at the start of the school year and are posted on Dr. Bodnar's teacher site via the school website (alcsny.org) and the bulletin board outside the band room (Room 282). If you miss a lesson for an unexcused reason, it is temporarily counted as a zero in your gradebook.<sup>2</sup> You can get rid of this zero by speaking with Dr. Bodnar by the start of your next lesson and signing up for a make-up lesson. If this is not done, the zero remains in the gradebook for the missed lesson. There are extenuating circumstances to this rule (ex. Extended sickness) and it is up to the discretion of Dr. Bodnar as to how these circumstances will be handled.

Because school can be hectic, homework can build up, and test and quiz study can take up time, each musician is allowed to miss one lesson each Quarter without it affecting their grade. If you attend all of your lessons during a Quarter, the lowest graded lesson will instead be dropped. Remember, everybody is responsible for making up any unexcused, missed lessons. Failure to do so will automatically count as the one 'freebie' lesson for you and lessons going forward for the rest of the Quarter must be attended or made up to avoid any zeroes being entered as grades.

**YOU** are responsible for keeping your teachers informed of when you have a lesson during class. It is a good idea to let teachers know at least one or two school days before your scheduled lesson, as well as the day of your lesson so you are not marked absent from class.

**Practice the music assigned after each lesson.** Every lesson, musicians are given music to practice at home for their next lesson. When you come in for your next lesson, you are graded based on your preparation. You do not need to play your music perfectly to get a 100 for your lesson grade! High lesson grades are the result of showing INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS on a your instrument. Below is a breakdown of what grades can be given and their reasons for being given:

100% Musician shows consistent, exemplary growth on their instrument through dedicated practice outside lessons and band rehearsals.

90% Musician show consistent growth on their instrument through practice outside lessons and band rehearsals. They may need mild re-teaching of material covered in previous lessons.

80% Musician attends lessons, but may be less prepared for this lesson than previous lessons. They may need mild to medium re-teaching of material covered in previous lessons.

70% Musician attends lessons, but does not show signs of consistent growth. More practice time and review of previously covered material is needed.

60% Musician shows loss of skill, does not practice their instrument or review previous materials.

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<sup>2</sup> Musicians may be excused from a lesson for the following reasons: being on a field trip, school not being in session (snow days, for example), absence on Dr. Bodnar's behalf, etc. These missed lessons are graded on a case-by-case basis and do not require a make-up lesson.

## END OF QUARTER ASSESSMENT/PERFORMANCE

The end of every Quarter is accompanied by either a written or performance-based assignment that is meant to showcase a musician's efforts during the school year. During the last two weeks of each quarter, musicians will be required to either perform music assigned to them by Dr. Bodnar or turn in a written project. The following Quarters and their requirements are listed below:

### 7/8 Band

Quarter 1 – Perform scales and excerpts from music being worked on in band rehearsals

Quarter 2 – Written music test

Quarter 3 – Perform scales and excerpts from music being worked on in band rehearsals

Quarter 4 – Summative performance test

### HS Band

Quarter 1 – Perform scales and excerpts from music being worked on in band rehearsals

Quarter 2 – Perform a NYSSMA rated solo at the All-County Solo Festival OR complete a written project

Quarter 3 – Perform scales and excerpts from music being worked on in band rehearsals

Quarter 4 – NYSSMA solo<sup>3</sup>

### How to get the full 20%

**Your grade here will reflect your grades from rehearsals and lessons.** Since end of quarter assessments are usually a culmination of the work already done in lessons and during band rehearsals, expect the grades given here to reflect or be close to the work put into the other two categories. For any performance-based activities, you should be consistently reviewing your scales and band/solo music to show how you are getting better at playing your instrument. For written activities, you should be reviewing taught material to be asked about on a test (7/8 Band) or produce a well-formulated research project by following a rubric given for said assignment (HS Band).

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<sup>3</sup> Students who choose to participate in the NYSSMA Solo Competition may use the score they receive there as a substitute for their in-school playing final for the Quarter.

## EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

As listed before, it's hard to fail band. There will be several extra credit opportunities available throughout the year to further boost a musician's score for the Quarter. Here are just a few examples of different activities that can be done to earn extra credit:

**Attending a school concert** – If you attend an ALCS concert you or a family member are not directly participating in, you may turn in a signed music program to receive one (1) point on top of your grade for the Quarter. Signatures may be given by any music teacher present at that concert (Dr. Bodnar, Ms. Scalise, Mrs. Stebbins, or Mrs. Wilbur). There is no limit to the number of times you may do this.

**Attending a non-school concert** – If you attend any concert and turn in a program/ticket stub and a one-page write up of the concert, you will receive one (1) point on top of your grade for the Quarter. You may do this up to two times per Quarter.

**Participating in an extra-curricular music group** – If you participate in any other organized music group, you may receive two (2) points for each Quarter you are active in the group. This includes the AL CODA Jazz Band, Allegany Alumni and Friends Band, etc. You may only receive credit for one extra music group each Quarter.

**Joining the Music Boosters** – If you want to know what is going on with the music program throughout the year, have your parent/guardian sign up for the Music Booster email list (as seen on the final page of this handbook). You will receive one (1) point for each Quarter and you get to learn what's happening in our music program as events develop.

**Volunteering at events** – Sometimes it may be necessary to look for volunteers for music events that occur within the school district (All-County Music Festival, school concerts, etc.). This will only be offered on a case-by-case basis by Dr. Bodnar himself.



# Concert Information

**PLEASE PUT THE FOLLOWING CONCERT DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR RIGHT NOW:**

## **7/8 Band**

Thursday, November 14, 7:00 pm

Thursday, March 13, 7:00 pm

Thursday, May 15, 7:00 pm

## **HS Band**

Thursday, November 7, 7:00 pm

Wednesday, December 18, 7:00 pm

Thursday, March 13, 7:00 pm

Thursday, May 15, 7:00 pm

Monday, May 26, 9:00 am (Memorial Day Parade)

## **CONCERT DRESS**

Concert attire for all music groups grade 7-12 is **black on top, black on bottom**. Here are some examples of what are great things to wear for concert and what to avoid:

### **DO WEAR:**

- Button-up dress shirts (long or short sleeve)
- Blouses
- Pants
- Ankle-length skirts
- BLACK socks or stockings
- Shoes (dress, flats, or heels)

### **DO NOT WEAR:**

- Polos
- Anything sleeveless or sheer
- Jeans
- Short skirts
- Leggings/yoga pants
- Sneakers, boots, or sandals

If assistance is needed in obtaining proper concert attire, please reach out to Dr. Bodnar or Ms. Scalise as soon as possible! The school and our Music Boosters have several different ways of assisting our musicians to look their best for concerts. Remember, our audiences will see our musicians before they hear them, so ensure they have the proper concert attire early for the school year.

## CONCERT ETIQUETTE

It's not only important to practice good concert etiquette as a way of showing respect for your fellow musicians, but also because concerts are public performances that showcase the school to the surrounding community. Please observe the following tips when attending concerts:

**Behave offstage how you wish to be treated onstage.** Every group in this school will always perform alongside another group, so please show common courtesy to other performing groups when you are not onstage. This includes quietly listening to music being performed, appropriately giving applause after songs are finished, and being a good representative of your school before, during, and after concerts in the public. Consequences of lack of behavior may include, but is not limited to, a lowering of a musician's participation grade for the quarter, a disciplinary referral, or, in extreme cases, excusal from the band program.

**Every musician is required to stay for the entirety of the concert they participate in.** Each performing group shares a concert alongside one or two other groups. It is common courtesy to remain for the entire concert so musicians can support each other for the hours of work put into their performances. Please budget your time accordingly to stay for the entire concert your musician is a part of.

PLEASE TEAR THIS PAGE OFF, SIGN, AND RETURN IT TO DR. BODNAR NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>.

My parent/guardian and I have read through and understand the Musician's Code of Conduct and agree to follow the guidelines outlined within.

Musician: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES! I am already a member of Music Boosters OR would like to be added to the Music Boosters Listserv so I can receive more information about the music program at ALCS.

My email address is: \_\_\_\_\_