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Forreston Junior High School  
Band Manual  
2023-2024

# FORRESTON JR. H.S. BAND MANUAL

## 2023-2024

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This manual is written in the hopes that a better understanding of the policies, rules, and regulations of our band program will be gained. If, however, at any time you're unclear as to the expectations of your child, please contact me.

### **BAND PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

The Forreston Junior/ Senior High School Band Program has many years of successful performances and has produced some of the finest high school musicians in the state of Illinois. This success comes from the philosophy that music is an art worthy of study. We are extremely proud of the musicians that have come through the program and we will have the same pride for all of our future students.

In the FJHS Band Program, you will learn more than just playing an instrument. You will learn about music history, music theory and composition, improvisation, and creativity. You will also learn many life skills that will serve you well in your future endeavors, whether you choose music as a career or not.

The cornerstone our program is *Daily Incremental Achievement*. Simply put, we are asking you to "Be Your Best Every Day". We are not asking you to be *THE* best, but be *YOUR* best every single day. Our staff and your fellow students are expected to bring the best every day as well. Together, we can overcome any of the challenges that will arise throughout the year. There are no quick fixes, so daily practice is expected of all students. I will help you set the goals to work towards, but you must do the hard work of getting yourself there.

### **WELCOME TO THE BAND FAMILY**

Welcome to YOUR band family. You are an important part of this family and in the coming years, will shape this program with your individual and group efforts. Our organization will be exactly as strong as you choose for it to be. With this choice comes your opportunity and responsibility to grow within the band family, create lifelong friends, and become an expressive musician and human being in our society.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

1. Students will:

- a. try to the best of their abilities to improve themselves and their ensemble every day
- b. advocate for themselves when they are struggling with any requirements of the course.
- c. Work with their director in a spirit of teamwork and cooperation.
- d. Come prepared every day with all necessary materials.
- e. Prepare their individual band part, solos, and ensembles through home practice.

- f. Receive instruction and criticism constructively and apply it to their playing for improvement.
- g. Maintain their instrument in top working condition.
- h. Care for all school equipment properly.
- i. Attend and be on time for all performances.
- j. Pay fees for supplies in a timely manner.

2. The director will:

- a. provide instruction so that the students can develop as musicians.
- b. Provide the students with music that is within their abilities to perform but provides a challenge to grow.
- c. be prepared for rehearsals.
- d. Inform the students and parents of all performances and extra rehearsals with enough lead time to arrange schedules.

3. Parents will:

- a. supply their child with an instrument (when appropriate) and supplies.
- b. support their child by attending all their concerts and other performances. Encourage their child to perform other than with the Forreston High School Band.
- c. Encourage individual practice outside of school for students to grow and perform to the best of their abilities.
- d. Consider providing private lessons for students to enhance their growth and performance

**ATTENDANCE** - All performances, even though they take place outside of school time, are considered "school work". Concerts, Contests, and Festivals are mandatory for all band members and are a part of their overall grade.

**REHEARSAL RULES**

- Follow directions immediately and the first time they are given.
- Keep away from equipment/instruments that do not belong or are not assigned to you.
- The Director is the only one allowed to talk in rehearsal unless you are called upon or it is specified.
- Have all materials ready: pencil, instrument, and supplies such as oil, reeds, mutes, etc.
- Stay in your seat/assigned area until you have been given permission to do otherwise.
- No one leaves the rehearsal until all materials are stored properly and the director dismisses you.

**BEHAVIOR**- The important question for students to ask themselves before they take any action is, "How will this help the band get better?" If it won't help the band, then don't do it.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES** - In the event that there is a conflict between a band activity and something else on your student schedule, please consult with me at the earliest possible moment. Please remember that excused absences are granted by the director and the principal and that we constantly must weigh the good of the group against the good of the student. Few excused absences (except illness or death in the family) will be granted less than **10 days before an event**. *Students who are too ill to perform or have had a family emergency must have their parent contact me **before** the performance.* The student will make up all excused absences including absences due to sickness before the quarter is over with projects determined by the director.

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**- Unexcused absences **will** result in a failing grade for the performance.

**UNIFORMS** – Band students need to provide their own black, button, collared shirt, black dress slacks (no jeans), black dress shoes (no tennis shoes or high platforms), and black socks. Girls may substitute hose for socks, as well as a black dress or skirt & blouse for a button shirt & slacks. While a student is in uniform it will always be worn properly and completely. This means that shirts will be tucked in, ties will be tied and tight, and collars will be buttoned. No jewelry (except stud earrings) may be worn at any time.

#### **REQUIRED MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT**

##### **1. INSTRUMENT**

- a. Brass- kept in good working order and supplied with a cleaning and polishing rag, grease, and oil.
- b. Woodwinds- kept in good working order and supplied with grease, swab, and three working reeds.
- c. Percussion- 6<sup>th</sup> grade: Beginning Percussion kit (Bells and drum pad).  
7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade: Snare sticks, timpani, yarn, and plastic mallets

##### **METHOD BOOKS:**

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade- Standard of Excellence book 1
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade- Standard of Excellence book 2
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade- Standard of Excellence book 3

**OTHER MATERIALS:** Pencil and 3 ring binder, 1”

**PRACTICING**- Each weekend students will bring home their instrument and lesson book for practice. Some weekends, they will be assigned an exercise to practice and perform for parents or guardians. After the performance, parents or guardians should sign the book to signify that they have heard their child play. This procedure should keep parents up to date on the progress their child is making.

**SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS**- in order to balance the instrumentation of the band, the school owns instruments that are too expensive for families to afford on their own. It may become necessary for me to assign one of these instruments to your student to play for the year or the semester. Understand that I will only make assignments

that are necessary for the well being of the band, and that I will only make an assignment to your child if he/she is capable of doing it.

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**MUSIC-** Students will be issued music throughout the year. It is to be kept neat and in good condition. All marks on music should be made with pencil only. Students who lose music or return it in poor condition will be fined for the replacement cost.

**GRADING BREAKDOWN PER SEMESTER-** Students will be graded on a combination of the following throughout the year:

Performance Exams- Students will be evaluated on their individual progress throughout the semester by live and recorded performance events.

Listening Assignments/Concert reflections- written reflections based on listening and responding to music to improve the students understanding of the music being performed by the ensemble and to improve individual student musicianship.

Formal Concert performances- Evaluated by individual and group performance in formal concerts. Also, based on the student meeting “on-time” and uniform requirements for the concert.

End-of-semester Performance Assessment- Students will be assessed by a performance exam at the end of each semester that will evaluate individual progress that each student has made throughout the semester.

**AWARDS-** Forreton Jr. HS recognizes excellence in music performance by awarding the **DIRECTORS AWARD** to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade student who contributes the most to the success of the band through their performance skills, leadership, participation, and attitude.

**SUPPLY FEES -** Students can charge reeds, oil, and sticks, etc. and pay for them at the end of each nine we grading period. At that time, all fees must be paid. Fees paid by check should be made out to Forreton high school. Failure to pay fees *in a timely manner* will result in denial of future charges.

**MUSIC PATRONS -** As a parent of a music student, you’re automatically a member of this organization. The Patrons do a tremendous job in supporting the various programs and events we undertake; we could not function without them. Help in making your students musical experience the best it can be by participating in the music patrons and helping their projects.

**MUSIC PATRONS MISSION STATEMENT –** Forreton Music Patrons is a nonprofit, fundraising organization that strives to enhance district 221’s music programs by providing the students extra opportunities to encourage musical growth. The Music Patrons support all aspects of the music program and align themselves with the

philosophy of both the Forreston Music Department and the Forrestville Valley School District 221.

### **MUSIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY**

At Forreston Junior/Senior High School, we strive to create life-long consumers of music. In the music department, we believe that music is an essential part of the curriculum and society as a whole. Through an active collaboration between teachers, students, parents, and the community, we strive to provide a proper musical education to help students develop the expression and understanding of the complex musical language.

Music education should contain many varied experiences for students. Because of the inclusive nature of music, the music classroom should be a cross-disciplinary classroom in which all subjects are incorporated in its curriculum. As such, it is a necessary, foundational aspect of a comprehensive education.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY-**

The school district, in an active partnership with parents and community, will promote excellence in a caring environment in which all students learn and grow. This partnership shall empower all students to develop a strong self-esteem and to become responsible learners and decision makers. The school district is committed to developing and using a visionary and innovative curriculum and a knowledgeable and dedicated staff.

**CONTACTING ME-** While I am always eager to talk to parents about your child's progress or their responsibilities, there is an appropriate time and place. It is easiest to reach me by email ([tcunningham@fvdistrict221.org](mailto:tcunningham@fvdistrict221.org)). You may also contact me by calling the junior/senior HS (815-938-2175). I check my email often, but there may be a delay in response as I am teaching or out of my office for a few moments. I will return all emails in a timely fashion. I am also available for face-to-face meetings, given enough time to arrange my schedule. If you would like to set up a meeting, please contact me at least 3 days in advance of your preferred meeting date.

This information probably does not cover every possible situation that occurs throughout the year. Please feel free to contact me any time you have a question.

I know that with your help, cooperation, and encouragement, your child will help make Forreston Jr. HS Band the best possible musical organization it can be, and that they will learn and grow in the process.

Sincerely,

Travis Cunningham  
Forreston Jr./Sr. HS Band Director

## 2023-2024 Tentative Schedule

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Beginning Band Camp (6<sup>th</sup>)  
Fall Concert (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>)  
TBA- IMEA Auditions (Select Students)  
Christmas Concert (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup>)  
JH Solo & Ensemble Festival  
Rt. 72 Festival Band/Choir  
Spring Concert (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>)  
Leaf River Daze Parade