

# Truckee

## High School



# Music Department

## Handbook

### 2023-2024



Dear Truckee High School Band Students and Families,

The school year is just getting started, and it promises to be a very exciting and fun filled year. We would like to welcome back all returning band students, and to extend a special welcome to all the new band students at Truckee High.

The music program at Truckee High School is an important part of the school as well as the community. Members of our band will be visible to the entire student body, as well as to many community members. We will perform numerous times throughout the school year for many events, including football games, rallies, school concerts, tours, community based events, and more.

A high degree of participation and preparation is expected from each student. These two elements are necessary for the bands to play music at a high level. Therefore, all students will be expected to attend every scheduled performance, spend time outside of class striving to become better at their instruments, arrive to class each day on time, and be ready to approach the music with focus.

I am excited to get the school year kicked off. We have a lot on our plate, but I know with enough preparation and dedication we will have success, both in terms of musical achievement and individual growth. For those students who are dedicated and committed to membership in the Truckee High School Band program, the rewards will be great.

Sincerely,

Jesse Steele  
Truckee High School Music Director

# Truckee High School Band

## Course Description Overview

**Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble:** These are the core bands at Truckee High School. Symphonic Band intended primarily for Freshmen. Wind Ensemble is intended for Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors. The two groups will combine with one another for concerts, and will rehearse together during Student Success Monday through Thursday. *Membership in one of these groups is a prerequisite for membership in any of the other ensembles.* All students enrolled in Jazz Band, must also enroll in Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble. The only exceptions will be made for irreconcilable scheduling conflicts (to be approved by the counselor). Each year the Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble will perform at various school based concerts, compete at festivals, and go on a tour.

**Jazz Bands:** Jazz Band is offered as an early-bird class. We will meet daily prior to the beginning of school. The Jazz Bands will have many community based performances as well as concerts and festivals. The Jazz Band performs at a high level, so an especially high commitment and intensity level is expected from each student.

**Marching Band:** The Marching Band is the most visible band at our school. We perform in front of hundreds to thousands of people every year. We will perform at every home football game, as well as the homecoming parade. Marching Band consists of all students enrolled in Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble for the first quarter of the school year. Each summer, marching band camp will be held sometime during the last two weeks of summer. Camp is mandatory, and will be scheduled prior to the previous school year's end, so students will have plenty of advanced notice to ensure their availability.

**Pep Band:** Pep Band is an afterschool activity. The pep band will only perform at two to three basketball games this year. We will perform for the girls and boys varsity teams. All Symphonic/Wind Ensemble students are required to attend the pep band games. If a student must miss a game, an excused absence form is required.

**Jazz Combo:** Jazz combo is an auditioned group, and will meet after school on Tuesdays, from 2:35 until 3:30. This group will perform at concerts, festivals, and community performances. It will have an emphasis on improvisation and will be mainly student run.

**\*\*Students who are chronically absent may be withheld from performances/trips at the discretion of the director. Please communicate with the director if a student will frequently miss rehearsal.**

# Grading Policy

*Getting an A in band is easy if students come prepared to class on time, have a positive attitude, demonstrate that they have practiced outside of class, participate, and play at all scheduled performances. Gradebooks in Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, and Jazz Band will reset quarterly.*

## **For all groups the grading policy is as follows:**

33% = Concert Attendance (100 pts per quarter)

33% = Musicianship

33% = Participation (100 pts per quarter)

A+=100% (student will earn 15 additional Sousa points for each A+ earned)

A= 90-99%

B= 80-89%

C= 70-79%

D= 60-69%

F= Less than 60%

**Concert Attendance:** Arrive for each scheduled performance on time, in full uniform (if appropriate), and be prepared to play (have music, instrument, etc.). Excused absences from performances will be handled on an individual basis. Excused absence forms must be submitted and approved 2 weeks prior to the performance. If they are turned in past the 2 week mark, students will lose 2 points per school day late. *If any student has an unexcused absence from a performance they will automatically lose 50 points from their Concert Attendance grade. Also, points will be deducted for each component missing from the uniform (bow tie, black socks, wrong shoes, etc.).*

**Musicianship:** Musicianship grades will be determined through various assignments, skills tests, and playing tests. All weekly playing tests will be graded on a 4 point scale. Students are expected to record and upload playing tests to the Google Classroom by Sunday night. Students may redo any playing test for a higher grade, only if they submitted their test via Google Classroom on time.

**Participation:** Students will earn full credit if they arrive on time, and are prepared to participate in class. For every tardy, students will receive a 2 point deduction (out of 100 points). For every cut, students will receive a 5 point deduction. If a student refuses to play in class without a legitimate reason, they will receive a 5 point deduction. Students may also lose points for not having their music, instrument, or a pencil. Points may also be deducted for engaging in rude behavior, using excessive foul language, or disrespecting equipment and/or students.

## **Extra Credit Opportunities:**

- 1.) **Students may earn 10 extra credit participation points by attending approved concerts and other performances in the community, and writing a half page report, double spaced, on their experience. These concerts must be pre-approved by Mr. Steele.**
- 2.) **Students may also earn 10 extra credit participation points by writing a 2 page, report, double spaced, on a teacher approved musician. Page one is to be a biography of the artist, and page two is a performance review (watch a Youtube clip of a performance and describe/review what you see/hear). There is no limit to the number of papers that may be submitted.**

### **Tour and Trips**

Every year the entire band goes on a tour. Each year the tour will be different, but will promise to be an enriching, fun, and educational experience. Typically, the tour lasts several days and requires us to spend a few nights together. For all trips/tours students must turn in a permission slip, to be signed by parents and teachers. If students do not submit the permission slip prior to departure they will not be allowed to participate in the trip. All school rules will be enforced on tour, as well as a strict curfew. If students violate the curfew they will lose 50 points from their participation grade. If students are found to be in the possession or under the influence of drugs or alcohol their parents will be called, and they will be required to immediately pick the student up from tour. Students will be subject to any school related consequences.

### **Communication**

I regularly use email as the primary form of communication with parents and students (school address only). Students will be encouraged to sign up to receive texts from the Remind app. I will use email/Remind for communication regarding performances, changes of schedule, and other things to be aware of. Feel free to routinely email me for any questions, comments, or concerns you may have and I will do my best to respond in a timely manner. Sometimes emails get away from me, so if I do not respond within 24 hours feel free to send me a reminder. Also, when responding to an email, or a thread of emails, only respond with content that concerns the subject of the email. I would prefer a separate email with a new subject title if you are going to ask questions about other topics. It helps me stay organized, and I can efficiently find past emails.

### **Instruments and Supplies**

Students are encouraged to get their own instruments, whether through a rent-to-own program or otherwise. Truckee HS has a limited instrument inventory that we can check-out to students if needed. There is a \$75 suggested donation for the use of a school owned instrument for the year, which goes towards repair costs. Students should be responsible for purchasing their own reeds, valve oil, slide grease, sticks, cleaning supplies, and any other additional necessary supplies. Reeds, valve oil, and other supplies will be provided to students in cases of need, but please do not rely solely on the school inventory for your instrument and supplies if possible.

### **Departments Awards and Sousa Points**

At the end of each school year students will be required to submit an itemized list of points earned through the year. This list will be reviewed by the Director, and the appropriate number of points will be awarded to each student. Any dispute in regards to the number of points awarded will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Director. Recognition and distribution of the awards will be honored at the Awards Ceremony. Below is a sample Sousa point sheet that students can use to keep track of their points throughout the year. Look over the sheet, as some of the points values have changed.

## Sousa Point Tally Sheet

*All point totals will be reviewed. Adjustments may be made, and are solely up to the discretion of the music teacher.*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Points Earned</b>
Symphonic/Concert Band	100 (50 pts per semester)	_____
Jazz Band	90 (45 pts per semester)	_____
Combo	45	_____
Pep Band	10 (per performance)	_____
Honor Bands (circle honor bands attended)		
CBDA All-State:	90	_____
Region V, Sierra College, Cap, NorCal:	30, 40, 75, 75 (respectively)	_____
Department Assistants		
Band TA	up to 50 pts (25 per quarter)	_____
Drum Major	75 pts	_____
Assistant Drum Major	50 pts	_____
Library/Equipment/Lighting/Sound(for band)	up to 25 pts	_____
Student Council (point totals contingent upon involvement)		
President	50	_____
Vice President	35	_____
Secretary/Treasurer	30	_____
Web-Tech/Historian	30	_____
Class Representatives/Activity Coordinator	up to 25 (depending on involvement)	_____
Solo and Ensemble Performances (list performances)		
Participation or Accompanist (and didn't score II or I):	25	_____
II or Excellent Ratings:	50	_____
I or Superior Ratings:	75	_____
Command Performance:	15 (in addition to 75 for a superior)	_____
Additional Performances and Special Circumstances ( <b>list performances below</b> )		
Community Service Performance (up to 50 pts):	10 (per performance not paid)	_____
Recital, including Rotary and Talent Show (up to 50 pts):	10 (per performance)	_____
Performed Composition:	15 (not repeatable)	_____
Special Trip Goodwill Performances (tour jazz/concert):	10 (per performance)	_____
Outstanding Soloist/Performance Award:	10 (per award)	_____
**Marching band events, festivals, community performances, and school concerts do not count, as they are part of the required coursework		
List performances here:		<b>SUBTOTAL</b>
		_____

**Other:** List positive contributions made to the music department, and request a fair amount of points. Mr. Steele may award more or less points depending on the effort and commitment put forth. Unpaid private lessons will result in 3 pts per lesson given, *up to 50 pts a year*. Volunteering to work the snack shack or tree lot, is worth 10 points. Performing a homemade instrument is up to 15 points (not repeatable). 15 points for any non-school related band camp you have attended (drum major camp, Donner Mine, Cazadero, etc.) Participation in an established non-school band (RYJO, Reno Youth Orchestra) is 30 points a year. Each A+ earned is 15 points (Jazz/Symphonic----1st-3rd quarters. Progress reports do not count).

**Explanation:**

**Points Requested**

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**DEGREES AWARDED**

**TOTAL POINTS THIS YEAR**

- Sousa Award (2 per year max. Tiebreaker=point total) 2000 points
- DaCapo Award 1600 points
- Gold Degree 1200 points
- Silver Degree 800 points
- Bronze Degree 400 points

**PREVIOUSLY EARNED POINTS (Mr. Steele has a record):** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPOSITE POINTS (POINTS THIS YEAR+PREVIOUSLY EARNED POINTS)=** \_\_\_\_\_

**DEGREE(S) EARNED:** \_\_\_\_\_



**THS Music Department Parent and Student Agreement**

**Due Friday, 9/1. 10 points on time, 8 points if one day late, 5 points if two or more days late**

Please complete this form, sign, date, and turn into Mr. Steele. Correspondence for the year will be established using this information. Parents, please provide ALL email addresses you wish to use for band related information and communication. Please include both parent email addresses (if applicable) and anyone else who needs to be on the contact list.

*If parents wish to join student Remind Text lists you may add yourself using the info provided below. It is not required, but will help keep you informed of schedule changes, reminders, snow days, call times, etc.*

*Jazz Band text list: Send a text to 81010 with this message: @e9he7fa*

*Symphonic/Wind Ensemble text list: Send a text to 81010 with this message: @64627c*

*Please fill in the contact information below (as legibly as possible):*

Preferred phone number to call parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary phone number to call parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred email for parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary email for parents: \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_  
(print parent name) (print student name)

have read, understand, and agree to adhere to the information contained in this handbook for participation in the THS Music Department, including the grading policy, the awards system, excused performance absence protocol, and the guidelines for conduct while on a trip/tour.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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