

2015-2016

Newton Music

Department Handbook



Revised 2015

Participation Recommendations

Every NHS Music member should strive to maintain at least a **2.0 grade point average**. Though band and choir may be an enjoyable activity and require more of your time, it is not meant to deter you from your school work. **SCHOOL WORK COMES FIRST!!** Do not allow yourself to slip into academic problems—please ask for help from your friends or any of the music staff if you feel overwhelmed (parents are *always* good too!).

I. General Rules

1. All students must report on-time to rehearsals and performances. Unexcused absences and excessive tardiness will not be tolerated and may result in suspension and/or expulsion from the program.
2. Profanity and other abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated.
3. Sexual Harassment will not be tolerated and will result in immediate administrative action.
4. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the school rules at all times when at performances or other venues away from NHS. We pride ourselves with how we treat other schools and how we act while abroad. All school rules and bus policies apply when we are on trips.
5. Insubordination to any of the staff or chaperones will not be tolerated and will result in possible suspension and/or expulsion from the program.
6. Talking shall be kept to a minimum during rehearsals and **NO TALKING** is allowed during performances of any kind. The directors or other staff have the right to institute silent rehearsals as need be.
7. **BE RESPECTFUL!** Treat everyone the same way as you would like to be treated. Because we spend so much time together, *it is vital* that we respect one another and get along. If you have an issue with someone that you cannot resolve, report it to your squad/section leader, chaperone, or the directors.

II. Attendance

Attendance at all rehearsals and performances are mandatory! The NHS program does not succeed if its members are absent! Please realize the commitment you are making to this organization and know that your attendance is mandatory and vital to our success.

III. Attendance Procedures and Policies

Procedure for missing a rehearsal or performance due to illness

Absences at rehearsals and performances affect the entire group. With advanced notice, the director can often make changes or adjust plans to accommodate an absence, minimizing the negative impact on the other students. Therefore, absences due to illness must be reported to Mr. Gaal as soon as possible with a phone call to 676-5066 or email to matt_gaal@newton.k12.oh.us

Absence at After School Rehearsals

A band or choir can only as strong as its weakest members. Attendance at rehearsals is mandatory and *extremely* vital to our success. The only excuses for missing rehearsals are as follows: family emergency, personal illness, or extenuating circumstances* as deemed by Mr. Gaal. Any unexcused absence from a rehearsal will result in one or more of the following:

1. Deduction in grade.
2. Loss of performance opportunities.
3. Removal from leadership responsibilities.
4. Dismissal from the program.

*There are only a few "extenuating circumstances" that will be deemed by Mr. Gaal as an excused absence from a rehearsal. **These absences must be reported at least one week in advance in writing to Mr. Gaal.** E-mail is an acceptable form of communication.

Pre-Band Camp and Band Camp (HS Marching Band Only)

Attendance at pre-band camp and band camp rehearsals are mandatory. These rehearsals are crucial to the band's success during the marching band season. Failure to attend these rehearsals will result in severe grade loss or dismissal from the program. Dates for these rehearsals are announced early to aid in planning of summer activities.

Performances

All members are required to attend all performances. The only excuses for missing performances are as follows: family emergency, personal illness, or extenuating circumstances* as deemed by Mr. Gaal. Any unexcused absences from performances will result in one or more of the following:

1. Deduction in grade.
2. Loss of performance opportunities.
3. Removal from leadership responsibilities.
4. Dismissal from the program.

*There are only a few "extenuating circumstances" that will be deemed by Mr. Gaal as an excused absence from a performance. If an extenuating circumstance is in conflict with the department calendar, we must be notified no later than one month before any performance. This allows us time to fix the spot in Marching Band or cover a part in Concert Band/Choir.

District and State Contest

District Contest and State Contest (held in the Winter and Spring of each year, consult the Department Calendar) are a major portion of the course curriculum. Attendance is mandatory of all students! It is a large portion of the student's grade. An unexcused absence by one member has a negative effect on the performance level of the entire group and will result in severe grade loss.

Requirements for Excused Absences

Marching Band

Local Competition	There will be a written assignment/project.
State Contest	There will be a written assignment/project.
Music Checks	Since this is a performance-based class, there is no make-up assignment. This must be completed to a director ASAP.

Concert Band or Choir

Sectional Rehearsal*	One hour of personal practice at NHS with intermittent instruction from the director. This must be completed to a director before District or State Competition.
After-School Rehearsal*	An hour and a half of personal practice at NHS with intermittent instruction from director. This must be completed to a director before District or State Competition.
Music Checks	Since this is a performance-based class, there is no make-up assignment. This must be completed to a director before District or State Competition.
Concert at NHS	There will be a written assignment/project.
District Competition	There will be a written assignment/project.
State Competition	There will be a written assignment/project.

*Sectional and After-School rehearsals are meant to work out specific problems (technical passages, intonation tendencies, balance and blend) within the section and cannot be made up with a paper. Lost instruction with these two types of rehearsals causes the director to re-teach sections when everyone is present. This of course takes away from the focus of the group and full rehearsal time.

Tardiness

"To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is to be left behind"

- A wise Band Director

Students are expected to be punctual for all events. For example, if the rehearsal is scheduled for 7:00 P.M., the student should arrive with adequate time to warm-up and prepare for the rehearsal to begin at 7:00 P.M.

Tardiness at a rehearsal may result in temporary suspension from future activities and/or loss of performance privileges. Tardiness at a performance may result in the student not participating in the performance.

IV. CHARMS Online Account

The music department is set-up to use the CHARMS Online Office Assistant. This system provides quick and easy communication between the school and family. It is **extremely** important that we all utilize this system as it cuts down on the cost of paper and postage. A majority of the communication for this year will come through this system so please take 5 minutes to log-in and see what it is all about. Attached at the end of this handbook are instructions on how to log-in and use the system. **Don't forget that the ability to pay for trips, fees, or other charges by credit card is available. It is fast, easy, and secure.** *Newton Schools and Newton Band Boosters will NEVER see your credit card number at any time.*

V. Rehearsal and Performance Conduct

Well-disciplined and efficient rehearsals are crucial to our success.

Guidelines

1. Be prompt and ready to start at the designated time. See tardiness procedure above. During school time, passes are required for excused tardiness.

2. Inattentive behavior, disrespect to directors, and excessive talking during rehearsals contribute to negative results and wasted time. Therefore, these actions will result in one or more of the following:

1. Removal from rehearsal.*
2. After school detention.
3. Grade reduction for student's rehearsal or performance skills.
(A part of the student's total grade.)
4. Suspension from the program.

*If you are requested to leave a rehearsal because of a discipline problem, it is your responsibility to arrange a conference with a director to discuss the problem before you may return to band or choir.

3. Members are never allowed to come to a rehearsal or performance under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance. Violation of this will result in severe disciplinary action.

4. Never chew gum.

5. When performing (especially when traveling to a performance), you are a reflection of the program, school, and community. Thus, destruction of property or insubordinate behavior will not be tolerated. Violation of this will result in **severe** disciplinary action by the directors and/or the administration.

6. Learn your part in each musical composition thoroughly. Practicing outside of rehearsal time is essential to you being adequately prepared. (You could call this our homework!)

Daily Requirements for Marching Band

1. Notebook with coordinates
2. Squad leaders should have charts
3. White socks and tennis shoes
4. Music and instrument in good working condition
6. **PRIDE, EXCELLENCE, RESPECT, DESIRE!!!**

Daily Requirements for Concert Band and Choir

1. Instrument in good working condition (Your voice is an instrument!)
2. Music
3. Pencil
4. Desire to be the best you can be.

VI. Marching Band

Students who decide to join the High School Band will participate in Marching Band from mid-July through October. The Newton High School Marching Band has a long history of excellence and is known throughout the state for its high quality of musicianship. Students deciding to join this group can expect to be a part of a fun, energetic, and exciting program which helps to instill internal pulse, tempo, musicality, and physical sport. The band travels to Walt Disney World every four years as well as several local district contests throughout the fall. More information about the program is discussed elsewhere in the handbook and current 8th graders will learn more information as the year comes to an end.

Commitment Requirements

When a student signs up for High School Band, they are also signing up for Marching Band. Because this class requires mandatory summer rehearsals, students will have until July 25th to drop the class without penalty. After that date, it is the policy of the school that the student will receive an "F" for the remainder of the semester. This policy is put in place so as to protect the integrity of the high school band program while ensuring its continued success. It is the hope of the music department and school that parents and students will discuss the yearlong commitment they are making prior to signing up for the class.

Uniforms

The uniform is a symbol of pride and power that represents this organization; it shall be treated with respect. It is the responsibility of the student to take care of their uniform so that the future use of these uniforms is ensured for all. When in uniform, the band acts as one. There are two types of uniforms, summer and full.

Summer Uniform

These uniforms are worn for the Memorial Day Parade and for some early performances in the late summer/early fall. All of the items will be purchased through the Newton Band Boosters by the student.

Red Shorts
White Shirt
White Band Shoes

Full Uniform

The full uniform consists of the following:

<u>Provided:</u>	<u>Purchased from band:</u>
Hat and Hat Box	White Shoes (same as summer uniform)
Plume	White Gloves
Jacket	Suspenders
Pants	Band T-shirt
Garment Bag	Poncho/Raingear

- ✓ White shoes will be purchased from the band at a price \$36.95
- ✓ White socks should be plain white with no emblems or writing.
- ✓ No jewelry should be worn while in uniform
- ✓ Depending on the weather, be sure to dress appropriately under the full uniform, nothing may be sticking out from the uniform.
- ✓ Sunglasses are allowed only after the band has performed
- ✓ Hats are allowed when in extreme cold but please limit them to school colors
- ✓ Hair must be put up under the hat and may not touch the jacket collar.

Uniform Care

- ✓ Always hang your uniform up when not being worn.
- ✓ Allow to air dry overnight before placing in your garment bag.
- ✓ If damp, do not put in a dryer or near a heat source! Allow to air dry so as not to damage the wool.
- ✓ Avoid pressing if soiled. If need be, put a dry cloth over the uniform and place iron on wrinkles with high steam and low heat.
- ✓ Hats should be kept in boxes.
- ✓ Your name should be clearly displayed on your garment bag.
- ✓ Use good judgment! Treat these uniforms as you would an outfit of your own that cost about \$450. Any damage outside of normal wear and tear will be your responsibility financially!

VII. Pep Band

Pep Band performs at all High School Varsity Basketball games and at Pep rallies during the school day. Pep Band is open to any High School and Junior High students who can play any of the following instruments: Saxophone (of any kind), Trumpet, Trombone, Baritone/Euphonium, Tuba, Bass Guitar, Electric Guitar, Drum Set, and Auxiliary Percussion. There will be a small cost for the Pep Band T-shirt which serves as our uniform. Practices will be after school on Monday's or Tuesday's and the schedule will be determined on a weekly basis by the director. If the Varsity team is having a good year, the band may travel to important tournament games.

VIII. Concert Band and Concert Choir Season

Concert Band

At Newton High School, after the Marching Band season, we transition into Concert Band for the remainder of the year. Marching Band will meet on an "as need be" basis for parades and special occasions throughout the winter and spring. All members of the Marching Band are required to be in the Concert Band and vice versa. As stated below, auditions will take place in late October or early November as Marching Band comes to an end. Concert Band is the "meat and potatoes" of the band curriculum. It is vital for the teaching and growth of advanced musical techniques which leads to a stronger program and gives students the opportunity to grow in their musical education. Concert Band will participate in Large Group District and State Contest as well as Solo and Ensemble.

Concert Choir

Concert Choir will meet all year in both the Junior and Senior High levels. Enrollment is open to all students regardless of whether or not they are in band. Choir is **HIGHLY** encouraged for all band students as it will only make you a better musician and give you additional skills to play your band instrument better. Choir, like Concert Band, will participate in Large Group District and State Contest and Solo and Ensemble. Because of our short rehearsal time, students will be expected to practice on their own outside of rehearsal so that our time will be maximized in learning phrasings, vowel formation, and other high level areas of musicality.

Challenge Procedure

Challenges give the students the opportunity to obtain higher chairs during the Concert Band season. There are two types of challenges:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Open Challenges | Students may challenge <u>anyone</u> of their particular section. This type of challenge is usually done only twice a year. |
| 2. Closed Challenges | Students may only challenge students who sit directly above them. This type of challenge is done as often as time allows during the Concert Band season |

No one may challenge within three weeks of a performance. Unless open challenges are announced, you may only challenge the person sitting above you. The directors will give music for challenges. To challenge, you must do two things:

1. Sign up to challenge when challenges are announced by the directors, and
2. Immediately inform the person you intend to challenge.

Failure to do this will result in the forfeiture of the challenge. Challenges will be judged by Mr. Gaal.

Before and After-School Rehearsals

In preparation for District and State Concert Band Contests, it is necessary to have before or after-school rehearsals. It is required that all members attend at least three sectionals and two full rehearsals. (The director will determine the exact number of rehearsals.) At sectionals, the member needs to have the music prepared and ready to play or sing individually in front of the director. This would be comparable to the Marching Band music check. Attendance at these rehearsals and the "music checks" are a part of your grade. Students are required to sign up for sectional times so as to avoid conflicts with other activities. They will be given many different times to choose from so that all members of a section can be in attendance without missing another activity.

IX. Junior High and Elementary Bands

5th Grade Band

This class is a student's first experience in the world of instrumental music! This class will focus on entry level music techniques in the first few weeks. We will also have instrument fittings to find out which instruments the students will be playing. Each student will pick their top two to three choices and the director will provide a recommendation as to which instrument would be the best fit. Classroom rules are as stated in sections I and IV. More information will be sent home at the beginning of the year after the class roster has been set.

6th Grade Band

This class will meet every day throughout the year. We will focus on skills the students developed in 5th Grade and continue learning new musical techniques. Students should follow the same guidelines as stated in sections I and IV. There are no challenges in 6th Grade Band. Coming to band with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn and grow on your instrument is vital to your success and enjoyment of this year!

7th and 8th Grade Band

This class will meet every day throughout the year. We will work heavily on middle school band literature while continuing our study of more advanced band techniques. Students should follow the same guidelines as stated in sections I and IV. Challenges are allowed in this band and will be announced when they will occur. **Private lessons are highly encouraged and any interested student should see Mr. Gaal to aid in setting up times with an instructor.** Students in this class are **HIGHLY** recommended to take Junior High Choir as this will only enhance your skills on your band instrument. This class is vital to the continued success of the high school program! More information about the high school band will be given to the current 8th graders as the year comes to an end.

X. Solo and Ensemble

Solo and Ensemble is offered in High School and Junior High. This event gives the students the opportunity to perform instrumental or vocal ensembles and solos. The students perform before a judge and audience. After the performance, they are given written critique and assigned a rating (Superior, Excellent, etc.). This is a fantastic way for students to receive outside performance advice, learn to perform in front of others, and gain self confidence. The Ohio Music Education Association sponsors this event. Cost varies per event for HS and is free for Junior High.

XI. Kincaids Music

Kincaids Music is the company of choice for purchasing and repairing your instrument. Kincaids has worked with Newton and hundreds of other local schools for many years. Their local sales representative for Newton, Chip Snyder, visits once a week. They have new, and used instruments available for purchase and also offer a rent to own program. For additional information, you can contact Chip Snyder at 1-800-231-6500 or visit their website at www.kincaidsmusic.com.

XII. Auditions

When necessary, the NHS Music program utilizes auditions both for Marching Band and Concert Band. These auditions are used to correctly place students in the right spot for their continued musical growth. Do not be offended if you end up in a different spot than you anticipated. Students are carefully placed so that the band will be able to perform at its highest level. Concert Band auditions will be held after the marching season is over. More information will be given as the date draws near.

XIII. Grading

All students shall be graded fairly, based on their individual accomplishments. Each student shall begin the grading period with an “A+” if in High School and Junior High. Elementary band students shall begin the quarter with “O” – Outstanding.

The grading scale will be broken down as follows:

50%	Performances
40%	Rehearsals and Music Checks
10%	Attitude

Performances

As stated above, students are required to be at all performances. Because this is a performance based class, this is the largest portion of the grade for the year. There is no reason why any student should not receive 100% in this category.

Daily Rehearsals

Rehearsals are a vital aspect to achieving success in this program. Without rehearsals, we can not expect to perform well at concerts and competitions. Each student will be required to show up on time with the proper materials. Students who are excessively late will lose points.

Music Checks

Each student will have to play their music for squad leaders and/or the directors for a grade. More details about music checks will be given when the first check is scheduled. Don't be nervous about these! It's not our goal to make you nervous. We want to know how you're doing so we can better help you and the band continue to grow successfully!

XIV. Point System

Newton has a long standing tradition of an excellent music program. This is due in part by the hard working and dedicated parents, grandparents, and other family members of our students. The purpose of the point system is to financially reward individuals for their support and provide incentive for participation in fundraisers. Points are accumulated at the rate of one (1) point for each two (2) hour shift. They are earned by working at the Basketball Concessions, Strawberry Festival (when applicable), and the Miami County Fair Cafeteria.

Miami County Fair Cafeteria

The Fair Cafeteria is the largest and most important fundraiser of the year. Success at this event is vital for continued growth and the ability to take trips, purchase music, repair instruments, maintain uniforms, etc. Everyone, grades 5-12, must work a minimum number of hours.

IMPORTANT Points can only be accumulated after the minimum requirement has been reached at the Fair Cafeteria.

Minimum requirements are as follows:

5 th – 8 th Grade:	12 hours
9 th – 12 th Grade:	24 hours

*based on one student per family...for each additional student in a family add 4 hours for 5th-8th and 8 hours for 9th-12th.

Since the Fair Cafeteria is broken into four, 4 hour shifts and one 8 hour overnight shift, either the student(s), parents, grandparents, volunteers, or combination thereof may work to achieve the minimum hours or more. For example, in a family where there are two students in the high school band or choir, they would be required to work a minimum of 32 hours. The two students could work two overnights and that would satisfy the requirement. Any time worked beyond that would accumulate more points for that family.

Florida Trip

Every four years the band celebrates their hard work and dedication by going to Disney World and performing in the Main Street Parade. This trip is a highlight for the band members, and is something worked for throughout their band career. Due to the cost of such a trip, the point system was established so that the students and their families would be able to ‘work’ to earn points to defer the cost of the trip.

Point Usage

Points are used for music related activities, including but not limited to the Florida Trip. They may not be used for expenses other than the Florida trip until it is completely paid for, when applicable. In other words, until a band member completes a Florida trip, money in their account may only be used to pay for the trip. If the family has no members eligible for Florida, then points can be used for other music related activities such as the annual overnight trip, Solo and Ensemble fees, and other music department fees.

Point Value

The value of each point will fluctuate year to year based on the number of contributors, profits, and number of events...much like stock. The profit earned from the basketball concessions will be the sole funding for this program.

Point Accumulation

Points are accumulated at the rate of one (1) point per each two (2) hour shift. For example, if a family account earns 25 points and each point is worth \$5.00, then the account would accumulate \$125.00. Points are accumulated in a family account until the last student graduates, no longer attends Newton, or quits the music program. When this occurs and there are points remaining in the account, the monetary amount will be deposited into the general fund. The family will not be owed any money as this is a volunteer, non-profit, organization and the forfeited money will be used for the future growth of the music program. Points can not be loaned or sold. Under special circumstances, points may be given away at the discretion of the director and the executive board. When it is time to “cash-in” points, a request form will be available from the treasurer.

XV. Newton Booster Organization

The NHS Music Program believes in parent involvement with the booster organization. It is expected that each parent volunteer throughout the course of their children’s involvement in the music program. The money that is raised through the boosters and the support that they provide is **invaluable** to the success of this program. Without them, the program could not function! Please find this year’s board members listed below and feel free to contact them with any questions you may have. **Our meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at 7:00pm in the school cafeteria.** Our last meeting of the year is the meeting where elections are held for the next year’s officers and other volunteer positions such as uniform coordinator, chaperone coordinator, etc. **Please consider taking the time to come to our meetings!** We want to partner with you in your child’s musical experience and bring you along on the ride...literally in some cases!

Jeff King – President
937-533-6411

Brian Miller – Vice President
937-572-8753

Christy Drieling – Treasurer
937-216-4625

Annett Bayer – Secretary
937-676-2754