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Welcome

August 10, 2011

Welcome to the Band Program at Millard West High School in Omaha, Nebraska. Because you are now a member of this Band, you can consider yourself a part of one of the most successful student organizations at Millard West! Besides being a great place to belong and to make friends, Band at Millard West is a successful, respected group which has earned numerous honors and awards. Participants in Band at Millard West have the opportunity to perform, travel, and experience what it can be like to be a part of a “team” of 170 members, working together towards a common goal of personal and group success. You’re going to love being in Band at Millard West, and we’re glad you’re here! The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with a complete description of the entire Band Program and all of its ensembles, activities, and policies. **Also included in the back cover of this handbook is the Handbook Compliance Agreement, which needs to be completed and returned to the Band Office by August 19 – thank you!**

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call the Band Office at 402-715-6023. We are committed to making your experiences with the Band Program at Millard West successful, educational, and FUN!

Looking forward to a great year together —

John R. Keith
Director of Bands

Kent A. Krause
Assistant Director of

Bands

Band and Other School Activities

Students at Millard West are encouraged to be a part of Band and other school activities in the school. Students who are involved in Band also participate in basketball, debate, football, forensics, golf, softball, soccer, student council, track, volleyball, drama, many academic clubs, and other school clubs, teams, and activities.

High School is the time of life to try many things – to participate in many activities. The Band Directors make it a priority to cooperate with coaches and activity sponsors to ensure that being a member of multiple activities *WORKS!* At Millard West, we *all* work together for the good of the student! Students are asked to do their part by recognizing that an increase in the number of activities increases the need for communication in all directions. Let us help you arrange your schedule so that high school is a wonderful experience for you!

Block Schedule

Millard West High School operates on the Block Schedule. Block scheduling has been a trend in school scheduling for several years, and works very well at Millard West. Simply put, there is more time during a typical student's high school career to take more courses – both core courses and electives. A student in a seven period "traditional" schedule can only take fourteen semester offerings throughout the school year (seven periods for two semesters). At Millard West our students can take sixteen classes each academic year (four periods for four semesters). Students at Millard West may be a member of up to three ensembles (Band, Orchestra, or Choir) all in the same period or "block". This is one of the many advantages of the format that you could not achieve in a "traditional" setting. If you would like to discuss the Block Schedule in more detail, feel free to contact a Director by calling the Band Office.

Ensembles

Varsity Marching Band/Wind Ensemble/Symphonic Band [*FULL YEAR ENROLLMENT REQUIRED*] – This course is for all students in grades 10-12 who successfully completed the previous year of band (and/or have had an audition with the director) and have an interest in advanced band literature. All students registered for Varsity Marching Band will participate in Marching Band, Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble, and Pep Band. Marching Band will create a marching show in the fall that incorporates visual and musical elements into a complete production. Auditions will be held for placement in either Wind Ensemble or Symphonic Band at the conclusion of the marching season. Rehearsals for both ensembles will begin after the completion of the auditions. Emphasis will be on the development of instrumental techniques and ensemble rehearsal skills, music literacy, music history, and performance practice. The best in modern wind band

literature, as well as the standard classics, will serve as the repertoire. Students will also have the opportunity to audition for Orchestra winds and percussion, Jazz Band, Pit Orchestra, and other small ensembles. Additional rehearsals and performances, which occur outside the regular school day, are mandatory.

Prerequisites: Class standing as a 10-12 grader and successful completion of the previous semester of Band, or permission of the instructor.

Freshman Marching Band/Concert Band [*FULL YEAR ENROLLMENT REQUIRED*] – This course is designed for the ninth grade student who successfully completed the previous year of band (and/or an audition with the director) and has an interest in band music literature. All students registered for this course will participate in the Freshman Marching Band, Mass Marching Band, Concert Band, and Pep Band. The Mass Marching Band performs in parades and during pre-game at home football games. Emphasis will be on the development of instrumental techniques and ensemble rehearsal skills, music literacy, music history, and performance practice. The best in modern wind band literature, as well as the standard classics, will serve as the repertoire. Students will also have the opportunity to audition for Orchestra winds and percussion, Jazz Band, Pit Orchestra, and other small ensembles. Additional rehearsals and performances, which occur outside the regular school day, are mandatory.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the previous semester of band, or permission of the instructor.

Jazz Bands – Jazz Band provides students with the opportunity to perform and study America's oldest art form: jazz music. Auditions will be held for placement in Jazz Band at the conclusion of the marching season. Rehearsals will begin after the completion of the auditions. Rehearsals will be held after school. We will create as many jazz ensembles as necessary to provide interested students with the best jazz education possible.

Prerequisites: Enrollment in Band or permission of the instructor.

Pep Band – Every student enrolled in Band at Millard West will be randomly assigned to either the Green or Black Pep Band. Pep Bands perform at Millard West home Boys' and Girls' basketball and District and State tournament games. Performances generally do not exceed one per week during the regular season. The Pep Band also performs for District and State Games. During the regular basketball season, band students are required to be at their assigned Pep Band performance, or find a qualified substitute [same instrument, same part] from the other band to take their spot. In the event that a student uses a substitute for a performance, notice must be made in writing to the Band Director. Pep Band is a very important public relations vehicle for the Band. The responsible participation of every band student is important and required. Missed Pep Band performances, without prior notification and excuse, will cause a lowering in the grade.

Solos and Small Ensembles – Students involved in the Millard West Band Program will participate in small ensembles (brass quintets, clarinet choirs, flute quartets, etc.) and

individual solo study. We will foster an environment in which small ensembles and soloists are active at all times of the school year. It is our desire to include as many students as possible in an individual study program.

Color Guard – The Color Guard at Millard West exists to give students who have a special interest in dance and work with visual props (flags, rifles, sabers, etc.) a performance venue. The art of “music in motion” is at its finest here as the students will create a visual image of the music through the use of lyric and jazz dance and work with “guard” equipment. Auditions for Color Guard are held in February of the previous school year. Color Guard members must be enrolled in Varsity Marching Band 1st semester only.

Grading Policy

Grading Policy - Your final semester grade will be an average of all grades taken in the following areas:

Musical Development:

- playing/memorization grades
- scales/rudiments tests
- written assignments (ex. drill books during MB, concert reviews, theory assignments, etc.)
- music terminology tests
- reading and understanding music notation
- demonstrating the ability to properly play an instrument (including but not limited to correct playing position, good tone production, articulations, intonation, etc.)

Performance Participation: All concerts/performances are required and graded. (This includes Marching Band and Pep Band).

- Students will receive 100% for attending/participating in the performance
- Students will receive a 10% deduction for having an unexcused tardy to a performance
- Students will receive a 10% deduction for not having the proper/complete uniform (example: white socks, anklet socks, no gloves, etc)
- Students will receive 0% for an unexcused absence
- Students will receive an “E” for an excused absence

An **Excused Absence** from a concert/performance includes illness from school the day of performance, or an absence that is **approved in advance by the Directors**. A concert absence may be excused “after the fact” in the case of a family emergency or a sudden accident or illness. In such an instance, students must bring a note signed by his/her parent the next school day. Such absences will be excused on a case-by-case basis. **At**

the Director's discretion, an additional assignment/project may be assigned to make up the excused absence.

An **Unexcused Absence** from a concert/performance includes skipping the concert or any other absence not covered above. **Work is considered an unexcused absence.**

Daily Participation/Rehearsal Etiquette: Students will receive 5 participation points per day. Daily participation points may be made up for an excused absence from school by completing 30 minutes of practice room time at school (with Directors' knowledge) or reviewing a music article provided by the Directors. Failure to complete one of the previous options will result in receiving a zero for the day for participation. Points will be deducted for each of the following infractions:

- Being prepared with all materials for class (instrument, pencil, music, drill, etc.)
- Punctuality (2 point deduction per tardy)
- Focus – making a positive contribution to rehearsal
- Adherence to rules
- Properly storing instrument in locker and locking locker

Additional Rehearsals: Students will also receive a grade for attendance at all additional rehearsals following the same guidelines as the Performance Participation.

Attendance for the Week of a Performance: If a student is absent two or more times the week leading up to the performance, the student may be pulled from that performance at the director's discretion. If a student is pulled, they are still required to attend to receive credit though they will not perform. Two tardies equal one absence.

A student is on probationary status after TWO unexcused absences from concerts/performances. A student may be dropped from the class after THREE unexcused absences from concerts/performances.

Private Lessons

Our desire for each student in the Band program is maximum musical development. We provide a variety of activities during Band class to accomplish this goal, but we are convinced that to truly achieve it, each Band student needs to work with a private teacher.

The musical benefits of studying with a private teacher/specialist are great. Most specialists have devoted a considerable portion of their lives to becoming fine teachers and performers on their own instrument. Because of their expertise, they will provide the best individual instruction for each Band student.

Although it is not a requirement of students to study privately to be a member of the leadership team or top performing ensembles, those who do study privately tend to develop their playing skills at a greater rate than those students who do not.

Rehearsal Schedule

Millard West has a tremendous advantage in the block schedule. This allows us to become extremely effective in the school day and will cut down on the number of extra-curricular rehearsals needed as compared with other programs of our size and stature. During the marching season (August-October), the Varsity Marching Band will rehearse on Monday mornings at 7:30, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 7:00am, and Thursday nights from 6:30-9:00, with the possible addition of Tuesday mornings at 7:00am as well. Varsity Drumline and Color Guard also rehearse on Monday night from 6:30-9:00. The Freshman Marching Band will attend rehearsals on Thursday evenings (August-September) from 6:30-7:30 and Friday mornings from 7:00-7:45.

During the symphonic/concert season (November-May), extra-curricular rehearsals will not be the rule, but rather the exception for the concert ensembles. Extra-curricular times will then be reserved for jazz bands, small ensembles, and lessons. We will only meet outside of the school day if absolutely necessary to prepare for a concert, contest, or festival.

Band Camp

Band Camp is our opportunity to work together before school starts to begin preparation of our Marching Band competition show for the following school year. Almost all of the competitive bands in the country have some sort of “band camp” format. In our case the objective will be to get a large amount of blocking of the show out of the way during camp. This will help to make the season as successful as possible. Additionally, there is a tremendous amount of personal growth and group camaraderie that comes out of an experience like Band Camp.

Although they are held during the summer, Band Camp rehearsals are *REQUIRED*. Much time is spent preparing for these rehearsals, and money is spent to hire special clinicians. Therefore, it is necessary that each band member attends. Band Camp does involve some hard work, but we ensure that there is plenty of fun to be had along the way!

In late April or early May, after the calendar has been approved for the following school year, we will publicize our Summer Band Camp schedule. If you have not received a document by June 1, please contact the Band Office. We want to give you enough time to arrange your summer schedule to include Band Camp. We understand that sometimes there are problems that cannot be solved, and we would like you to call and discuss with us any concerns that might arise. We will do our best to work with you as long as we can have open lines of communication and that you understand this activity is extremely important to our success.

Uniforms

The Millard West Band uniform is considered very contemporary and attractive. Our uniforms are new this year and we want to keep them looking great for many years to come. Students are expected to take pride in the uniform, realizing that by wearing it, they are visibly identifying themselves with the Millard West High School Band Program.

The Band program will provide dry cleaning two times per year (at the conclusion of the marching season and after final uniform collection). **Please do not attempt to clean your uniform!**

In being a member of the ensemble each student must assume the financial responsibility for the safety of this uniform (This includes Color Guard members. The cost of the guard uniform varies from year to year as the uniform changes every year). Your signature at the end of this handbook will indicate your knowledge of and agreement with this policy.

In the event that the entire uniform, or any part, is damaged or lost, replacement becomes the financial liability of the student and his or her family. Our regular Band uniforms cost \$555.00 each to replace, so it is important that each one is taken care of. The cost breakdown for our uniforms is as follows:

Hat and Hat Box	\$72.00
Plume	\$32.00
Gauntlets - Pair	\$34.00
Coat	\$264.00
Pants	\$123.00
<u>Garment Bag</u>	<u>\$30.00</u>
Total Cost	\$555.00

When Millard West Band students are scheduled to be in uniform, they are expected to be *COMPLETELY* in uniform. The hat is generally only worn *DURING* performance – full uniform *CAN* mean that the hat is off. Please respect what this policy does for the perception and “classiness” of our ensemble. Always have your hat box ready to store your hat when not in use. In addition to the required black Marching Band shoes, students will wear the white moisture wicking t-shirt or long-johns under their uniform coat (as to not have any dye run into the coats), and **ALL BLACK** calf length socks.

It is sometimes necessary for students to change into uniform in an area less private than a restroom or dressing room. For this reason, students are required to wear some type of lightweight shorts [boxer shorts are *NOT* acceptable] over their underwear. Modesty is required of all students when changing into and out of uniform. Students are **NEVER** to be seen in their

“bottom layer” of clothing. Violation of this policy will result in removal from the day’s performance events. NO EXCEPTIONS!

The *PEP BAND UNIFORM* will consist of the Pep Band shirt and jeans or shorts according to the instruction of the Directors. Students out of uniform will not be given full performance participation credit, and may not be admitted to many events.

Honor Ensembles/Solo & Ensemble Events

Throughout the year, students will have several opportunities to audition for a variety of Honor groups. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities. Being a member of the All-State Band or other honor ensemble is a wonderful way to receive some individual recognition for years of hard work spent on instrument practice, is a fantastic educational experience, and can even lead to college scholarships!

Students will also have a number of opportunities to play a solo or in a small ensemble at some local festivals and contests. Freshmen and Sophomores have the opportunity to participate in the Elkhorn Band Olympics, usually during the third week of February. Juniors and Seniors have the opportunity to participate in the District Music Contest at the end of April. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to study their instrument as an individual or in a small ensemble, which is a completely different educational experience than “full band”.

Fundraising

Throughout the year we will hold several fundraisers, and we will designate ahead of time how the profits will be used. Students are expected to take part in fundraisers that benefit the general operating account of the Band. This funding is essential to the activities of the Band Program. We will have one general activity account for operations expenses. *Please note: Money that is raised by a student in our fundraisers becomes property of the Band Department.*

Instrument Rental

If you use a school owned instrument at any time during the year you will need to pay the Millard District Instrumental Rental Fee. The fee for a whole year is \$90.00. If a student uses a horn for a certain percentage of the year, they will need to pay that percentage of the \$90.00 fee. Please understand this is to cover the cost of having the instruments cleaned and repaired for the following school year. All percussion students will be charged an instrument usage fee of \$25.00. The percussion fee covers the cost of maintenance and repair. These fees are very nominal compared to that of renting the same instrument at a local music merchant. We will

waive the fee occasionally for specific needs or if a student switches to a Millard West instrument to help out the balance of the band. Please call us if you have questions.

Travel

We will travel a number of times throughout the year to locations in our state and immediate region. These trips will not usually cost the students money, other than for meals.

We will also take some regional trips every year or every other year, and at least once every four years we will take a “major trip” to a destination that will require staying overnight (such as a national concert or marching band festival, etc.). We will conduct specific fundraisers for these events, and students will each have an individual account set up through our office. Profits from these fundraisers will go towards the student’s account, and they may make deposits if they wish. If a student does not participate in the trip, all funds raised become property of the Millard West High School Band.

Student Behavior Policy

All students are expected to follow the guidelines and procedures set up in the Millard West Student Handbook. The Directors and Staff will follow the discipline policies as outlined by the school and the district. If you have questions about these policies, feel free to contact the school Administration Office at 715-6000.

Students are to remember that they are representing Millard West High School and the Millard West Band at all times. Please do not let behavior or actions leave a bad impression on our school or music department.

Bandroom

[1] Please be respectful of the Band Room, and the Music Department as a whole. The Band Room is a classroom, not a lounge. It is used by many groups throughout the day. Absolutely no food or drink will be allowed in the ensemble rooms or practice rooms. This policy may be different from that of the school but we must adhere to it to keep our facilities and equipment in superior condition.

[2] There is a locker and a lock for everyone to use in the Band Room. You will have one checked out to you at the beginning of the year. The school is not responsible for your instrument. All concert, symphonic, and jazz folders must be kept in the folder cabinets.

- [3] School policy states that the educational facility should be vacated by 3:30. If you are not involved in a band activity, please get your instrument after school and exit the building as quickly as possible.

Football Games

- [1] Students are to arrive at the stadium in **Full Uniform**.
- [2] Instrument cases should be left in cars. Please do not bring instrument cases into the stadium.
- [3] Garment bags should be left in cars. Please do not bring garment bags into the stadium.
- [4] Percussionists should arrive at the stadium in full uniform except for the coat. The coat should be carried in the garment bag. A uniform rack will be available at the truck to hang up the garment bags. Garment bags are not to be brought into the stands.

Bussing

When the Millard West Band travels, it will be necessary for us to travel by bus. The following list is the bus behavior regulations for the Millard West Band.

- [1] Students will follow the rules and regulations set out by the bus driver, or the bussing company, at all times.
- [2] Students will be required to ride with the Band on the busses, and not drive themselves. This is an important policy that must be followed for a number of safety, planning, and financial reasons.
- [3] Students are responsible to see that the busses are kept clean. Students will perform a final cleaning of the busses before the end of the event or day. *All students will stay at the drop-off point* until all of the busses have been cleaned to the Directors' or chaperones' satisfaction.
- [4] All students should assist in loading/unloading the equipment truck. We will have a crew to organize the truck, but they are not responsible to see that your instrument is on or off the truck.
- [5] We will create bus lists so that we may keep track of everyone as easily as possible. If a sign-up sheet is provided for you to choose your seat, follow instructions completely. Failure to responsibly sign up for a bus seat could lead to loss of the privilege of choosing your own seat.
- [6] Students are not to throw anything out of the bus, or hang arms, legs, or hands out of the windows. Chaperones can and will move students.
- [7] Personal stereos must be used with headphones.
- [8] Students may bring food and drink on a trip as long as they are neat and pick up their trash.
- [9] Students will respect the wishes of the chaperones as if they were the Directors. Chaperones will communicate any problems to the Directors, who will then handle the emergency or discipline problems.

Chaperones

When the Millard West Band travels, it will be necessary for us to utilize parental chaperones on the busses. The following is a list to help you prepare for this fantastic opportunity. Please feel free to call us if you have questions.

- [1] All chaperones, drivers, and Directors will meet no fewer than 30 minutes before the departure time to organize the day. This meeting is usually held in Room 410 at Millard West.
- [2] Please monitor the students throughout the day to see that they are being respectful to the busses, the drivers and to other facilities. Inform the Directors if you see a problem.
- [3] Chaperones will have a roster to take roll on their bus before we leave any location. Band Staff members will be on each bus, but it is the responsibility of the chaperones to take attendance.
- [4] If you have any substantial problems, do not hesitate to have the busses communicate via radio and stop immediately. The Directors will be glad to handle any discipline problems.

Band Awards

Each Spring, the Millard West Music Association hosts a Music Awards Banquet. Six awards that will be given by the Band Department on a regular basis are the John Philip Sousa Band Award, The Patrick Gilmore Band Award, The Louis Armstrong Jazz Award, The Woody Herman Jazz Award, The National School Marching Award, and The Michael Bebout Spirit of the Band Award. These awards focus on very important aspects of the program. *The Directors will give other awards/scholarships annually as the need arises.*

The John Philip Sousa and Patrick Gilmore Awards will each be presented to a senior in the program that represents outstanding achievement and interest in the Millard West Bands, for singular merit in loyalty and cooperation, and for displaying the high qualities of conduct that instrumental music requires. These awards will be selected and awarded by the Directors of Bands.

The Louis Armstrong and Woody Herman Jazz Awards will be presented to a jazz ensemble member representing outstanding achievement and interest in the Millard West Jazz Bands, for singular merit in loyalty and cooperation, and for displaying the high qualities of conduct that Jazz Band requires. These awards will be selected and awarded by the Directors of Bands.

The National School Marching Award will be presented to a student or students who exhibit outstanding contributions on the field. It honors the musical contributions and dedication of student leaders whose example inspires other students.

The Michael Bebout Spirit of the Band Award is presented to a student that exhibits outstanding service and dedication to the band program, far exceeding all expectations. This student takes the initiative to help wherever and whenever needed.

Letter Awards

Students can earn Millard West Letter Awards for their participation in the Band Program at Millard West. The “Letter” system is under the control of Mr. Rick Hook, Activities Director, and his office. Some significant changes have taken place in the Band’s letter system, so read the following information carefully!

Letters can be earned in the following areas: **Band** and **Color Guard**. Students will maintain an accurate record of their own Letter Point total throughout the year on the following handbook pages. **NO LETTER POINT RECORDS WILL BE MAINTAINED BY THE DIRECTORS!** Approximately 2 weeks before the Music Awards Banquet, students will be asked to turn in their Letter Point total sheet(s), with supporting documentation (when necessary). The Directors will review each Letter Point total sheet for accuracy, and awards will be determined accordingly. **STUDENTS WHO WISH TO LETTER MUST KEEP A RECORD OF THEIR OWN POINTS!**

The *Color Guard Letter Award* is presented to those students who are members of the Color Guard, demonstrate an exceptional level of commitment and dedication to the ensemble, and successfully complete the fall marching season.

Letter Point Sheet

Please circle any of the events in which you participated. Total the points on the left-hand side.

_____ Marching Band Performances - 10 Points each (pit crew - 5 points each for competitions)

8/20	8/27	9/2	9/8	9/17	
9/24					
March-a-thon	Millard Days	FB Game	FB Game	MWWC	Bellevue East
9/30	10/1	10/8	10/13	10/15	10/22
FB Game	Columbus	MOCFV	FB Game	OMI	NSBA

_____ Concert Performances – 20 Points each

12/8	1/24	2/15	2/18	3/29	4/14	4/18-21
5/3						
All	WE Only	WE & SB	CB Only	CB & SB	SB & WE	WE
All						

_____ Pep Band Performances – 4 Points per game (two games most nights)

Green Band →	12/9	1/6	1/14	2/10
2/18				
Black Band →	12/17	1/10	1/19	2/17

_____ Additional Pep Band Performances - 2 Points each (BB Playoff, FB Playoff, VB Playoff)

_____ 1st year – 5; 2nd year – 10; 3rd year – 15; 4th year – 20

_____ Honor Ensemble Participation – 10 Points Each

_____ Honor Ensemble Audition - 3 Points each

_____ Superior Rating Large Ensemble - 10 Points each (NSBA MB, District WE)

_____ Superior Rating Solo & Ensemble - 10 Points each (list all)

_____ Excellent Rating Solo & Ensemble - 5 Points each (list all)

_____ Winds & Percussion Orchestra Personnel - 10 Points (full year)

- _____ Jazz Ensemble Member - 15 Points
- _____ Pit Orchestra Member - 5 Points
- _____ Show Choir Band Member - 5 Points
- _____ Leadership Team - 15 Points
- _____ Varsity Drumline/Frontline member – 5 Points (Based on addition rehearsal attendance)

- _____ Section Leader (not on leadership team, during concert season) - 5 Points
- _____ Performance on Honors Recital - 5 Points
- _____ Performance at Wildcat Showcase - 5 Points
- _____ Attend Summer Music Camp - 5 Points
- _____ Perfect attendance at Summer Rehearsals (Varsity Band - not including Band Camp) – 5 Points
- _____ MWHS Band Camp Attendance – 5 Points
- _____ Private Lessons on Primary Instrument - 10 Points (Note from Instructor with signature)
- _____ Tri-M Member - 5 Points
- _____ Community Performances - 2 Points each, Director’s discretion (maximum of 10 points)
- _____ Service to Band Program - 2 Points each (list all) (ex: concert set-up, winter formal, etc.)

_____ Total Points

_____ Director's Points - List other items you feel are worthy of points towards a letter. We will consider each and assign points where appropriate.

Do Not Write Below This Line

_____ Total Points

Total Points needed to letter in band: Wind Ensemble – 340, Symphonic Band - 310, Concert Band - 225.

These point totals are based on the number of performances currently scheduled. If the number of performances changes for any of the ensembles, the point total needed to letter will change accordingly.

The final decision for receiving a letter will always rest in the judgment of the Directors, even if the required points have been achieved.

Handbook Compliance Agreement

I have read the Millard West Band Handbook, and understand the content. I agree to accept responsibility for any non-compliance with any or all of those requirements listed in this handbook. I also agree to accept financial responsibility for the items listed herein.

parent/guardian signature

date

student signature

date