



HIGHVIEW HI NOTES

Quarter 1
2008-2009

Welcome Back!!

Welcome to the 2008-2009 school year! For those who are new to the Highview band program, welcome! My name is Mr. Schmidt; this is my eleventh year teaching at Highview. I hope summer was a relaxing break for everyone. I spent my summer preparing for the Chicago marathon in October and the birth of our first child in December. I'm looking forward to hearing what everyone did over their summer break.



This is the first of four quarterly newsletters. This one will go home with the students, and the other three will be mailed. Many thanks go to Shannon Johnson for helping put this newsletter together. Refer to this newsletter for questions about expectations, policies, and performance schedules.

If you have questions or concerns please feel free to call the band office at: 651.621.6787 or send an e-mail to: andy.schmidt@moundsviewschools.org.

For the students who are returning—thank you for a great year last year!! We had a wonderful end to our school year and a very memorable concert at Bethel. Check out the district website for a video clip of our spring concert. I'm anxious to get started this fall and continue the good work we did last year. During summer band I was able to meet some very talented sixth graders so I'm excited to start the year!

For everybody there are a lot of fun things planned for the upcoming year. All of the bands will be quite large, between 35 and 70 students each, so achieving a big sound shouldn't be a problem! For the seventh and eighth grade students, Mr. Zitnak will return on a part-time basis to teach lessons. I think the stage is set for another successful year in band!

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

MASS BAND FOOTBALL GAME
8th Grade Band
Friday, October 10.....7:00 pm
Irondale High School

WINTER CONCERT
7th, 8th, Jazz Bands
Monday, December 8.....7:00 pm
Highview Middle School

WINTER CONCERT
6th Grade Band, Choir, Orchestra
Tuesday, December 16.....7:00 pm
Highview Middle School

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Concert Dress

At our concerts we want the emphasis to be on the music. We want a clean, uniform, professional look for the students on stage out of respect for the audience and the music. At **ALL** concerts, except for the 8th grade fall football game, appropriate dress includes black pants/dress/skirt and white shirt. No tennis shoes, no t-shirts and no jeans.

For boys this means black dress shoes, black socks, black pants, white dress shirt, and a tie. Some boys like to wear a black sports coat or suit and this is acceptable but not required.

For girls appropriate dress includes: black shoes, black socks, black pants and a white shirt or sweater. All black will be acceptable for girls who wish to wear a dress. If you choose to wear a black skirt you must wear black nylons or tights. Girls, please remember that you are on stage performing and dress/skirt lengths should be kept below the knee. To play our best, we must look our best. There is plenty of time before the first concert to do some shopping if necessary. Good deals can be found at discount retailers like Target, Marshall's or Wal-Mart. If you have any questions please see Mr. Schmidt.

Fundraiser

The first week of school students will be bringing home Happenings coupon books to sell. While I'm not a huge fan of fundraisers, the size and scope of what we do in the music department at Highview goes beyond the means of what the school can provide. I would like to continue providing performance opportunities for students so I'm asking each student to sell at least two Happenings books. They can be sold to neighbors, friends or family, it really doesn't matter. The money we earn from the fundraiser will cover bus transportation for field trips; equipment purchases like stands, folders and instruments; and the purchase of new music at all three grade levels. More information will be coming home with students in the upcoming days. Please continue to support the bands at Highview by helping sell Happenings books.

1st Quarter Jazz Band Schedule

Please add this to your calendars at home and please do everything you can to avoid conflicts. Mondays are our only extended rehearsals as a full group so it is essential that appointments and conflicts be arranged around our rehearsal schedule. Every player is important to the success of the band. If students repeatedly miss rehearsal they may be removed from the band. Note there will be no long rehearsal on October 13th because I will be driving home from Chicago that day after the marathon.

Rehearsal	Monday, September 15 2:20-4:00 p.m.
Rehearsal	Monday, September 22 2:20-4:00 p.m.
Rehearsal	Monday, September 29 2:20-4:00 p.m.
Rehearsal	Monday, October 6 2:20-4:00 p.m.
Rehearsal	Monday, October 20 2:20-4:00 p.m.
Rehearsal	Monday, October 27 2:20-4:00 p.m.

Help Slips

Students should use a blue help slip if they need copies of music for at home practice, an instrument repair, or any other type of request. They are available on the music folder cabinets. Help slips speed up the beginning of each rehearsal. Once filled out, these go in the grade level basket on the folder cabinets for Mr. Schmidt to collect. Student helpers are able to fill most requests for music within a day or two. You may pick up your request in the appropriate blue tray in the band office. Students will learn much more about these in the coming days.



Jazz Band

Students who are in jazz band have been assigned to Mr. Schmidt for Homeroom. The first day that we will play is September 8. Extended rehearsals will be on Mondays. We will rehearse until 3:50 so that students can take the 4:00 activity bus home.

Our first extended rehearsal will take place Monday, September 15. Students who have excessive absences from the extended rehearsals will be replaced. Please plan appointments, sports, and extracurricular activities around these Monday rehearsals. The extended rehearsals will count as 90 minutes of practice. Students should document this on their practice reports. Wednesdays will continue to be a reading and listening day where students are encouraged to bring in jazz CD's.

Practice Expectations

The practice expectations are fairly liberal. Almost any musical rehearsal or performance **outside of school** counts as practice time. Following these expectations will insure good progress and improvement outside of the classroom.

- ♪ One practice report will be turned in each month
- ♪ Grades are earned weekly
- ♪ The expectation for an A is 150 minutes of practice per week (30 minutes/five days per week)
- ♪ Fewer practice minutes results in a lower grade
- ♪ Practice reports must be turned in within the first week of each month, **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**
- ♪ You may count piano lessons and practice, guitar lessons and practice, in addition to voice lessons and practice. Ask Mr. Schmidt if you have questions.
- ♪ The September practice report is attached so that each family has one to start the year.

Part of your grade will be determined by your at home practice. The biggest cause of a poor practice grade is forgetting to turn in the sheet each month. This is an easy A when turned in.

Concert Attendance

All students will attend all performances. Conflicts may be excused only with a written explanation **two weeks** before the performance. Excused absences may be made up by assignments given by Mr. Schmidt. Unexcused absences cannot be made up and will affect your grade. Soccer games, hockey games, hunting trips, vacations, etc. are not excused absences. You have the performance schedule at least six weeks prior to any performance. The success of the band depends on **YOUR** contribution! There is a performance schedule attached to this newsletter and you are responsible for scheduling around our performances.

Grading Procedure

This is an area that includes a slight change from previous years. With Smart Music technology there will be a greater emphasis on quality performance. Grades will be earned in four specific categories. They include: Effort 40%; Lessons 25%; Practice 25% and Performance 10%. Effort is derived from the work you do in band class. Your lesson grade is based on the lessons you attend in school. The monthly practice report will determine your practice grade and quarterly performance assessments will determine your performance grade. Last year, over 85% of the students earned A's or B's in band.



Lesson Expectations

The following are the expectations for success in your twenty-five minute band lesson.

- ♪ Know when your lesson is scheduled
- ♪ Attend with lesson materials prepared
- ♪ Expect to be challenged
- ♪ Attendance will be recorded

For sixth grade students your lesson will be scheduled with Mr. Schmidt. You will receive one small group lesson every seven-day rotation in addition to your full band rehearsal. You will be pulled out of class just one half of a period every seven days.

For seventh and eighth grade students, Mr. Zitnak will be here on Mondays throughout the year to give lessons. All seventh and eighth graders will have their lesson on alternating Mondays. Your lesson time will **NOT** rotate so that you are pulled out of a different class each week. For some eighth graders, private instruction will count as your lesson, and you will not have to do a lesson during the school day; just turn in a lesson waiver each quarter.

Obviously, if you don't attend your lesson, we can't give you a satisfactory grade. Almost all students who attend their lessons earn A's or B's. Part of your grade in band will be determined by your performance in lessons. They will begin in late September.

Rehearsal Expectations

These are the expectations for good rehearsal etiquette. Following these will insure a quality band experience for everyone.

- ♪ Be on time
- ♪ Have your instrument every day
- ♪ Follow directions
- ♪ Know when to be attentive
- ♪ Have a pencil at all times
- ♪ **NO GUM OR CANDY EVER!!**

These expectations will be strictly enforced and are consistent with several other teachers' expectations. Consequences include written assignments, office referrals and detention. Talking and playing is acceptable before class and in between pieces but should cease when Mr. Schmidt gets on the podium. A portion of your grade will be determined by the effort you demonstrate in rehearsal.

Instrument Donations Accepted

If you have an old band instrument sitting at home that is taking up too much space, please consider donating it to the Mounds View school district. This is a tax-deductible donation that you can make by contacting the band director at your school. This will help provide a valuable music experience for ALL students. Thank you for your help.



Instrument Storage

The school provides storage shelves in the band room for larger instruments. Please store smaller instruments (i.e. flutes and clarinets) in your hallway lockers. Percussion stickbags should be stored in hallway lockers as well to prevent theft or loss. Students with larger instruments may use the shelves in the band room for storage. The band room is locked in the evenings and instruments are secure. **Every instrument needs a nametag.** So many instrument cases look alike; every student needs a way to quickly identify their instrument. Mix-ups sometimes occur and a labeled instrument case eliminates the confusion. Mr. Schmidt has nametags available throughout the year.

Resale Prices

Highview sells many band supplies at a discounted price to students. Some prices have increased from last year. Please make checks payable to Highview.

- Clarinet reeds--\$2.00
- Bass Clarinet reeds--\$2.50
- Alto Sax reeds--\$2.75
- Tenor Sax reeds--\$3.00
- Bari Sax reeds--\$3.50
- Oboe reeds--\$10.00
- Bassoon reeds--\$12.00
- Valve oil--\$3.00
- Slide cream--\$2.75
- Cork Grease--\$1.75
- Clarinet swabs--\$3.50
- Alto Sax swabs--\$4.50
- Clarinet thumb eez--\$1.25

Most any other supply can be ordered through the school at a discounted price. Please see Mr. Schmidt if you have questions.

SmartMusic—What Is It?

SmartMusic helps students receive, practice, and submit their performance assessments from home. Students practice with professional accompaniment, making practicing fun and more productive. SmartMusic includes built-in assessment features which provide your child with immediate feedback on their performance and motivates continued improvement.



smartmusic®

SmartMusic works on your PC or Mac computer and requires an internet connection to activate your subscription and receive assignments. I also recommend a SmartMusic microphone, even if you already own a computer microphone, as the SmartMusic microphone has a clip that allows it to be attached to the instrument or student's shirt while practicing to provide accurate assessment. System requirements and support contacts are listed at www.smartmusic.com/support.

Our district has secured special pricing for our students. The one-year subscription is \$21.25 (\$30.00 retail price) and the recommended microphone is \$16.95 (\$19.95 retail price).

Instructions for ordering SmartMusic:

1. Visit www.smartmusic.com and enter this code: MOUNDSVIEWPUBLo8-D64.
2. Follow the onscreen instructions to order your subscription, microphone and installation disc.
3. When you receive your SmartMusic shipment at home, install the software with the installation disc and launch the program. You will be prompted to activate your subscription using your child's e-mail address and password that you created while ordering.

Assignments will be posted to SmartMusic each five day week. The assignments will be from the Standard of Excellence method book or excerpts from your students' band music. Students can practice the assignment and submit their best effort to be assessed.