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# **FOUR POINTS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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# **BAND**

*Quality music, tools for life.*



## **2019-20 HANDBOOK**

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**GRADE SIX**

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### **DIRECTORS**

*Jessica Gonzales*  
*Cori Reebenacker*  
*Adrian Teti*  
*Joe Hobbs*

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## **Welcome!**

Welcome to the Four Points Middle School Band Program! It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that we introduce our band program to you in a more detailed manner. The FPMS band program has established a wonderful tradition of excellence and we welcome you to be a part of it.

Your child's participation in our band program is beneficial in many ways. Band students are engaged daily in a highly creative performing art that stimulates growth in areas of the human brain that no other discipline can. This growth effortlessly transfers into your student's academic life and sets them ahead of their peers. In addition, our band students will develop traits such as teamwork, responsibility, dedication, self-discipline, social skills, confidence, leadership and dependability. Membership in our band program will give all a sense of accomplishment as well as pride and respect as the students develop musical and personal skills that will enrich their lives.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the guidelines and expectations for making this year a success for all involved and to serve as a guide and resource for students and parents. Both students and their parents should take the time to thoroughly read this handbook. Upon completion, the contract that was passed out to your student during class should be signed and returned to school indicating your understanding of these guidelines and expectations.

## Contact Information

The directors encourage positive communication and are willing to discuss any aspect of a student's progress in band with his/her parents.

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Please visit our website at <http://www.fpmsband.com> for important information for students and parents.

## Goals and Objectives

- Organizational Skills
- Practice Techniques
- Mental and Physical Discipline
- Citizenship through Group Endeavor
- Physical Conditioning
- Cultural Growth
- Value Judgments
- Music Theory
- Proper Instrumental Technique
- Creative Self-Expression

## ***Conduct Expectations***

Band members will observe all procedures set forth by Leander ISD, in addition to the following, as they pertain to the instrumental music setting:

- Any behavior, which is not representative of good citizenship, as perceived by the band staff, may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand as well as the band program. This also applies to the actions of student leaders in both public and private events.
- All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Ten Ethical Principles at all times. Display of profanity, temper, flagrant violation of rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the group.
- Students will follow directors' instructions.
- Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time with all equipment, including music, pencil, instrument, and all supplies to rehearsals daily (see detailed supply list for each instrument).
- Students will keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
- Students will not use or play on equipment they do not own without permission from a director.
- Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
- Students should request permission to speak by raising their hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be extremely quiet so that time will be utilized wisely and as efficiently as possible.
- When allowed in the band hall, either before or after school, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress.
- Students will respect the property of others, and return their equipment to its proper storage place when not in use. Students should keep their equipment in the designated storage area, and keep said storage area clean and neat in appearance. Students who demonstrate great difficulty with this may lose the privilege of having a storage area in the band hall.
- Students will not deface or mark on music stands, chairs, walls, etc.
- Students will not write on dry-erase board without permission from a director.
- Students will utilize their assigned storage slot/locker for instrument cases during rehearsals. Cases should not be brought into rehearsals unless requested by a director (exceptions: flute, clarinet, oboe, and bassoon).

## ***Digital Citizenship***

Maintaining a higher standard of conduct will also include ensuring that dance team member websites are appropriate. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication appearing on the internet is public domain, even if it is marked private. Members are responsible for their personal websites and postings, as well as posting from or on other students'

websites. The areas of appropriateness will include but are not limited to profane, foul, or disrespectful language (abbreviated or alluding to), pictures, suggestive poses, clothing, references to alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco, and postings (either verbal or photos) that could be interpreted as being negative or threatening towards other LISD teaching staff or band members, or that demonstrate poor sportsmanship or a disrespectful attitude towards other bands. Any such incident will result in review by the principal (or designee) and may lead to probation or dismissal from the band.

In addition to considerations listed above under Probation and Dismissal, band members that violate the above guidelines shall be subject to the following:

- Upon confirmation of a violation, the member will be asked to remove any offensive items from the website(s) and will be asked to give an apology and plan of action to deter this behavior to the principal, directors, and band members. Parents/guardians will be contacted and made aware of the offensive behavior.
- If a violation occurs that is deemed to be of a more serious nature, including but not limited to a threat, bullying, inappropriate and/or foul language, or a series of violations, the student may be subject to a higher level of discipline as determined by the director and school administration, such as suspension, probation, or dismissal from the band.

## ***Due Process***

All Leander ISD students are entitled to due process in accordance with LISD guidelines. Our goal as a staff is to ensure that all students are treated fairly. Please contact one of the directors if you have any concerns. We will work with you to resolve problems. We are here to provide a quality music education for all our students.

## ***Financial Obligations***

It is the philosophy of the Four Points Middle School Band that no student should be denied the privilege of band membership due to financial hardship. For options in meeting financial obligations, parents should contact the director.

## ***Fundraising***

We have several fundraisers planned for the school year. Participation in fundraisers is encouraged, but not required. Fundraisers will be used to defray the students' fees and trip expenses. Any other money raised will be used to purchase additional materials and equipment for the FPMS Band Program. Due to budget limitations, this has become a necessity. If the money is not fundraised, then any expenses will be paid to the band department from the family's own financial resources.

A portion of the fund-raiser profit (usually 10%) will go towards operating expenses for the band program. Operating expenses are defined as expenditures not covered by LISD budget. Our "wish-list" includes, but is not limited to: extra music for concerts, funds to bring in guest clinicians, supplies, technology, sound equipment for the band department, commissioned music, instrument accessories, fees and/or deposits for honor band entries and other competitions.

**All money fundraised will belong to FPMS and LISD, and cannot be refunded to a student. If a student fundraises money and then is unable to attend a trip for any reason, the money the student raised becomes property of the FPMS activity account. As per LISD policy, the funds are good only for the academic year, and are not transferable for the students from year to year.**

If a student leaves the FPMS Band program, all money goes back to the general FPMS account. Funds are not reimbursed or distributed to students or their families

Fundraised money can only be applied to the student's expenses. A student cannot fundraise for another student or chaperone.

Donations are accepted to help the program and are appreciated. Any funds donated to the FPMS band program are given to the school to be used for expenses outside of student fees and trip expenses. These include, but are not limited to instrument repair, replacement equipment, helping families in need, and unforeseen expenses that might occur.

## ***Online Database Privacy Notice***

Cut Time is an online data information and communication website that we use to keep members informed about events, practices, and other important updates. Depending on the level of access set by the director or teacher, the website may contain contact information for students and parents, directory information for students, and confidential information such as payments made, account balances, uniforms, grades, practice logs, etc. Users and administrators of the website agree to protect the privacy of the information, and agree not to use any information for non-program related purposes.

## ***Band Placement***

Yearly placement in each band and occasional changes are based on the following criteria:

- Instrumentation needs and limitations
- Eligibility status
- Overall performance and consistent progress
- Attendance at all band functions
- Attitude and behavior

Because band is a team, and missing parts and imbalance of instrumentation compromises the entire group, participation in the FPMS Band program is at least a one-year commitment.

*Special Note* – A student must pass band and have a director’s recommendation to be enrolled for the next semester.

## ***Care of Facilities***

- No gum, food or drinks are allowed in the building except when authorized by the directors.
- All trash (paper, broken reeds/drum sticks, etc.) is to be deposited in the wastebaskets provided.
- Acts of vandalism or the willful misuse of school property will be dealt with severely and appropriately. Every band member is responsible to help the director’s monitor the facility and control vandalism, which includes writing or carving on walls, destroying music, or breaking school property.
- Absolutely no student is allowed in the workroom without permission.
- Practice and ensemble rooms are designed for practicing, not social gatherings.
- Please knock on office doors, and if you are invited in, you may enter. Otherwise, they are off-limits to students. Students may not use directors’ phones without permission.
- The telephone in the band hall is not available to non-band members and is not to be used for personal calls, but should be used to call parents for rides, etc. Students must ask permission to use the phone and all calls will be limited to 2 minutes.

## ***Attendance***

In order to have and maintain a high-quality band program, attendance from all members is essential. While the FPMS band follows all school and district policies and procedures, the following additional guidelines outline the attendance procedures and policies for the FPMS band. These attendance guidelines also apply to activities held outside of the school day.

### *Excused Absence*

Absences will be excused at the discretion of the directors. Appointments, tutorials etc. will not be an excuse for absence. Absence due to personal illness requiring medical attention, death in the family,



or other extenuating circumstances (approved by director) may be considered for excused status. Students who are continually ill may be required to provide a doctor's note releasing them from participation in order to ensure the well-being of the child and to reduce concerns of the band directors. If in doubt, an absence should be checked with a director.

### Unexcused Absence

Students with an unexcused absence from any required band activity will receive a zero in the grade book. Rehearsals, concerts, contests, and competitions cannot be made up. Students with an unexcused absence to a sectional rehearsal will be required to schedule a make-up time with their band director within one week.

### Concerts/Performances

Concerts and performances are an integral component of the band curriculum. Students should consult their schedules for dates and times. Each of the concert ensembles will perform at various times throughout the school year and are mandatory. Periodically, the schedule may change and updates will be communicated. Concerts are considered to have three parts: warm-up, performance, and listening. The concert begins for the student at the warm-up. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes when the last group performs and directors have given permission for students to be dismissed. A general report time will be given for all students. In the event a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible to make up all missed work!

Performances of the ensembles will include but are not limited to the following:

- Winter Concert
- Spring Festival
- Spring Concert
- Others as needed

Special Note – Students absent from school for any reason, or are in alternative placement the day of a concert, contest, or competition may not participate.

## ***Daily Supplies***

The following list is what each student should plan to bring to the appropriate rehearsal and/or performance. Other items may be added at the discretion of the directors.

- All issued music
- Pencil
- Instrument
- All supplies relative to their instrument
- Band Binder
- Metronome/tuner
- Other equipment as needed (could vary from year to year)

For supplies specific to your instrument, refer to <http://www.fpmsband.com>.

## ***Grading Guidelines***

LISD band programs have instructional objectives that relate to the mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for grade level subjects or courses. These objectives are aligned to address the academic skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses. Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities are designed so that the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the instructional objectives. The student's mastery level of these objectives is a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course.

Students will be expected to meet the responsibilities for each band class as determined by the director. Since band is an academic music class with some extra-curricular activities attached, the band student's grade will reflect achievement in both curricular and extra-curricular areas.

### **Grades will be based on:**

- 30% - Practice Sheets (based on punctuality and practice time). Late practice sheets will result in a one tier penalty according to the practice sheet grade grid per week late.
- 20% - Written tests
- 30% - Playing tests
- 20% - Participation (bringing materials, showing effort, attendance at all concerts and contests)

The following list is provided to give students and parents examples of items that may be subject to grading. Additional assignments may be given at the discretion of the director.

- The student will be on task and focused during class.
- The student will have instrument, books, music, pencils, and supplies in rehearsals.
- The student will be prepared to play his/her part successfully.
- The student will mark music and take notes as needed.
- The student will be expected to improve individual music skills consistently.
- The student's individual skill development will be evaluated through recorded music tests, individual playing tests, scale tests, and/or written tests.
- The student will be evaluated on improvement of ensemble skills during daily rehearsals.
- The student will be expected to improve his/her performance fundamentals.
- The student will be evaluated for improvement of his/her music fundamentals through daily observation during the "basics" part of each rehearsal.
- The student will be expected to demonstrate correct posture, hand position, embouchure, air production, and articulation as monitored during rehearsals.
- The student will be expected to develop a historical knowledge of the literature relative to their respective instrument.
- The student will receive a grade for each performance during a grading period.

## ***Weekly Practice Sheets***

Students will keep a practice sheet every week that serves as 30% of the overall average. Practice sheets will be both goal and time-oriented. Students will write down the objectives for the coming week during class with their director and log the number of minutes per night they work towards meeting those objectives. The daily practice requirement is 30 minutes a day, six days a week, for a total of 180 minutes a week. Students will receive extra credit for practice beyond the required 180 minutes. Practice sheets are to be signed by a parent/guardian and turned in every Friday. **Practice Sheets will not be accepted without the required signature.**

## ***Eligibility***

All LISD Bands adhere to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and LISD. Some band activities are designated as extra-curricular. Students participating in these activities are governed by eligibility requirements. A student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the six-week period following a grade reporting period in which the student received a grade lower than seventy in any class. Loss of eligibility does not take effect until seven days after the end of the reporting period. Ineligible students are not suspended from practice or rehearsal of extra-curricular activities. The student is not suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for the summer or any other vacation time.

Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student has been suspended as a result of failing, he/she may regain eligibility by passing ALL courses in the third week of the affected grading period. Reinstatement of eligibility would occur seven days after the three-week progress report period (see TEA/UIIL Side by Side).

The eligibility law does not affect activities that are considered curricular components of any course. Examples of these activities are all rehearsals and performances that take place as a regular extension of classroom instruction. Any performance that is competitive in nature or for which admission is charged is deemed extra-curricular.

In addition to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and LISD above, students are required to pass the 5th six-weeks and must not receive an ISS placement during the spring semester to attend the spring trip.

## ***District-Owned Instruments***

LISD will provide a limited number of instruments for student use. These instruments include highly expensive instruments such as the bassoon, oboe, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, horn, euphonium, tuba, and general percussion equipment. This equipment is generally purchased by the school district for student use because of its extremely high expense. *Thus, all district owned*

equipment must be handled with optimum care. Students failing to take proper care of their district-owned instrument may lose the privilege to use such instruments.

The following is a list of general procedures for district-owned instruments:

- If possible, students who play large instruments and are dependent upon LISD buses may be issued one instrument for home use and one for school use. This will be at the discretion of the directors and will be based on instrument availability and transportation needs.
- LISD does not provide insurance for individually owned or district-owned equipment. It is required of all students utilizing district-owned instruments to provide insurance coverage for the instrument that has been issued to them. Students will be held responsible for all district-owned instruments issued to them. This responsibility will include fire, theft, accidental damage, abuse and general maintenance not incurred through normal use.
- Students and parents must sign an instrument checkout form before the student can use the instrument.
- Each instrument will be issued in good playing condition. Each issued instrument will be checked and cleaned prior to issue. Students are expected to maintain their issued instruments accordingly.
- The band member is financially responsible for all equipment and/or materials checked out to him or her.
- All equipment and materials must be kept in their proper storage location when not in use.
- LISD will assess a fee for routine (end of year) cleaning and maintenance of district-owned instruments.

Special Note – District-owned instruments are not to be treated as "free" instruments. Basic supplies must still be purchased and repairs must still be made just like personally owned instruments. Please strive to treat these instruments as if they were your own. Most district-owned instruments exceed \$2,000 in value.

## ***Instrument Storage and Identification***

Every student must have his/her name and phone number or Four Points Middle School's phone number fastened to the outside and/or inside of his/her instrument case. Also, be sure to keep a record of the serial number of the instrument in the event it is stolen or lost.

Combination locks are provided by band families for band families and are required to be locked at all times when the student is not in the band hall. Combinations to locks are given to Mrs. Gonzales during the first week of school and are kept on file for the school year.

## ***Private Lesson Program***

This is a district wide program that provides a high-quality enhancement to classroom instruction. Teachers are all specialists on their instruments. Most of our teachers are professional musicians in

the Austin area and have advanced degrees in the performance of their instruments. Lessons are extremely valuable to the individual student and are highly encouraged.

- *ALL* students are *ENCOURAGED* to take individualized private instruction.
- Teachers are screened and interviewed by the district.
- Lessons will be given weekly during the band classes, before, and after school.
- If there is a need for before/after school lessons, every effort will be made to schedule private lessons at times that do not conflict with sectionals or other activities.
- Detailed information will be distributed on the private lesson program.

## ***Uniform Guidelines***

We have one uniform for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at FPMS.

- Close Toed Shoes
- Blue Jeans (long, without holes)
- Band t-shirt (tucked in)

## ***Concerts/Performances***

Concerts and performances are frequent with all bands. Students should consult their schedules for dates and times. Periodically, the schedule will change and updates will be sent home and posted on the FPMS Band website.

- Concerts are considered to have three parts: warm-up, performance, and listening.
- The concert begins for the student at the warm-up. **Punctuality is essential.** A concert concludes when the last group performs and directors have given permission for students to be dismissed. A general report time will be given for all students.
- All concerts are a group effort, thus, **ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED!!!**
- All concerts are an extension of the classroom and will be graded accordingly.
- Students should be punctual and prepared for each performance/concert.
- In the event a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible to make up all missed work!
- The appropriate dress for all concerts will be a dress uniform (see Uniform Guidelines).

## ***Concert Behavior Expectations***

Band students will exhibit proper concert behavior during all performances, in either their own band or as an audience member. Students will be graded on their behavior. Concert etiquette is an integral part of music education. Appropriate conduct in formal and informal concert settings is included in the TEKS.

The following rules will be followed at all times:

- Talking is not permitted on stage or in the audience. It is disrespectful to the performers on stage and audience members.
- Do not distract the performing band in any way.
- Do not leave your seat for any reason during a performance. You will be given ample time to use the restroom and drinking fountain before a concert begins. If you must leave, do so as quietly and inconspicuously as possible (make sure the doors do not slam shut). Leave between songs only.
- No food or drink is allowed on stage, backstage, or in the seating area. This includes water bottles and gum.
- Cell phones must be turned off (not on vibrate or silent) and stowed away. Any student using a cell phone during a performance may have consequences.
- Move between the seating area and stage in quiet, single-file lines. Sit in your assigned seat/row. Do not talk as you enter or exit.
- Support your fellow band members with appropriate applause. Yelling, whistling, shouting names, etc. is not acceptable.
- Set a good example for the audience and other students. Other people may not know how to behave in a concert setting.
- We hope all parents and guests will stay for the concert when bringing a student to a concert. If a student needs to be picked up, please do so in a timely manner. Any student not picked up on time may not be allowed to participate in future FPMS activities.
- Students are expected to stay for the entire concert.

## ***Travel Guidelines***

The band will frequently travel on either school buses or commercial buses. Student conduct is expected to be at the highest level on any trip.

Students who have been subject to school-level discipline in the course of the school year may be deemed ineligible to participate in non-UIL field trips, at the discretion of the director and/or campus administration.

Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with his/her parent must notify a director in writing with parent signature, prior to the event. Permission will be granted or denied based on the circumstances of the occasion.

Students must have all necessary forms (Medical/Travel Release) completed and on file with the band office to travel on any trip with the band.

While on the bus students will:

- Remain seated at all times.
- Sit properly in a forward position.
- Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris.
- Keep all body parts inside the bus.

- Use only approved type/headset radios (no audible speakers).
- Remain silent when addressed by an adult on the bus.
- Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, singing, screaming, whistling, inappropriate jokes, etc.
- No public displays of affection.

### Special Note

As a member of the band, you are a representative of your school. Always be on your best behavior. If you are in doubt about an action, do not do it! Your conduct at all times should be considered a good reflection on the school, the band, your home, yourself, and the community.

### Chaperones

Adult chaperones are a great asset for the band program. Students will treat them as an extension of the band staff. Proper respect will be shown to all adults at all times.

## ***Solo and Ensemble***

All band members will prepare and perform a solo and an ensemble unless other permission is granted.

Grades will be issued for preparation and participation in the Solo and Ensemble process.

## ***Safety***

Due to the heavy student traffic going in and out of the band hall, and due to the possibility of theft of instruments, students not enrolled in the FPMS band are not allowed in the band hall at any time. Friends of the FPMS band members may wait outside the band hall to accompany their band friend to another location.

## ***Band Hall Hours***

The band hall normally opens at approximately 7:15 AM every day, and closes at approximately 5:45 PM every day, except for Fridays or the day before a holiday – in which case the band hall will close at 4:30 PM. The band hall will be open for private lessons, as needed by the private lesson teachers.

Students are allowed to stay in the band hall during these times to quietly work on homework, have their private lesson, or practice inside a practice room. Students are NOT allowed to be in the band hall during these times to act in a disorderly fashion.

## ***Parent Drop off and Pick up***

Parents must make accommodations for transportation of their children to and from sectionals, and to and from the band hall during trips and special events. Lack of transportation will not be an accepted excuse for missing a band function. To ensure the safety of their children, parents are encouraged to have a plan for drop-off and pick-up of students in a timely manner from band events. Directors will only be at the band hall during the times listed above for sectionals, and during trips for the times listed in the itinerary.

For the safety of all involved, students must go home after the band hall closes. Parents, please be aware that the main office will be closed before sectionals end. Going home right after sectionals through family transportation, car pools or walking home are ways to help your child get home safely and in a timely manner.

## ***Band Parent Volunteers***

Our middle school band does not have a booster program of its own, but if you have the desire and time, we do have band parent volunteers who assist the students and directors with various tasks. Some areas of need are fundraising tabulation and collection, computer data entry, check deposit computer entry, chaperone recruiting, news and public relations, and other tasks. All band volunteers must fill out the LISD district volunteer form and be approved by the school district. On the form, please indicate that you would like to help the band program. You may complete the application online at <http://www.leanderisd.org> and click on the community involvement heading, then volunteer program. Thank you for your help ahead of time!



## **6th Grade Band Handbook Signature Page**

Please read and sign below as indicated:

Students,

I have read the Four Points Middle School Band Handbook and understand the requirements for being a band member of this quality organization. I realize it takes full cooperation and dedication (100% from me) to help make our band meet its potential. I also realize that my failure to follow policies and directions could result in disciplinary action, which could lead to placement in another band or dismissal from the band program.

As a member of the Four Points Middle School Band, I acknowledge the following as responsibilities I must fulfill if I wish to remain a member. I will:

- Practice with a purpose and turn in weekly practice sheets
- Demonstrate my best on playing assignments and written theory tests
- Attend all concerts, rehearsals, and contests
- Treat my peers and teachers with respect and maintain appropriate conduct
- Maintain my grades for eligibility and self-achievement
- Have a high standard for improvement in class and on my own

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (First, Last - Please PRINT)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Parents,

I have read the Four Points Middle School Band Handbook and want to support it and my child. I have received a copy of the FPMS Band calendar for the current school year and am aware that a copy also exists on the FPMS Band website.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone #