Band Responsibilities Contract

Dear Parents and Students of the Dunlap Bands:

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year. We are glad that you are part of the rich tradition that is the Dunlap Marching Eagles and the Symphonic Band/Wind Ensemble. Because we care about a quality experience for our students, we feel that it is important to communicate some rules and expectations for the band classes.

The whole concept of grading for the band is based on one simple thought, "If you show up and try, you will get an 'A'." The interpretation of this statement is straightforward; students will be graded on their punctuality, attendance, attitude, equipment management, and their progress as a musician. There will be some playing/marching tests and students will be expected to achieve at a high level. However, progress from beginning to end of the grading period is taken heavily into account. **Everyone who is putting forth effort will improve and will be duly rewarded.**

On the other hand, if a student has an unexcused absence for a performance, he/she should expect a grade reduction of one or two letters **for the semester** and possible loss of performance privileges. Unexcused absence or tardiness involving rehearsal may result in a grade reduction and/or other make up consequences mentioned above. Similarly, a blatant lack of preparation for either playing or marching assessments may result in a grade reduction. **The excuses for an absence include family emergency or illness.** (For those who are involved in Dunlap sports, we will work with the coaches if there would be a conflict.) Examples of invalid excuses include jobs, parties, family trips/celebrations, concerts, community/church events, etc. If you feel that there are extenuating emergency circumstances not covered above, please call and discuss them. We are always willing to listen (there may be a family wedding in which the student is involved.) But we must be notified weeks, if not months in advance in order to prepare and make adjustments for such an event. **There is no excuse for waiting until the last minute to provide notification of anything other than illness or family emergency.** Please check the band calendar and resolve conflicts right away. You may email us at any time at jshea@dunlapcusd.net or jshea@dunlapcusd.net.

These guidelines are not designed to frighten anyone; they are simply stated to prevent misunderstandings. Because we are a performance team, we all must depend on each other to be there and do our part to support that team. Learning to be there for each other is a good lesson, and there are consequences for those who, on rare occasion, do not demonstrate an understanding of that lesson.

Sometimes parents/students assume that because a student has attended most of the band events, he or she is entitled to missing something, a "get out of jail free card", if you will. Or, a parent or student will determine that a particular event is not as important as another, or a parent will say "it's not my child's fault, it's mine; I forgot", or the most unfortunate excuse of all; "Other people are missing events and pretending to be sick, so the guidelines don't apply." As ridiculous as these excuses sound, we are not making them up. Every year they are tried several times. I have included them here to avoid misunderstandings. Please do not make these assumptions, because they will result in a grade reduction for the student for the semester**.**

In addition to an explanation of the grading policy, we wish to stress the importance of **FOLLOWING THROUGH WITH YOUR COMMITMENT** to be a part of this program. We spend thousands of dollars designing a music and visual program passed upon enrollment numbers and instrumentation. Holes in the drill have a detrimental effect to **ALL STUDENTS**. Once you return this form, you are making the commitment to start and finish the year as a member of this fine program. Except for unavoidable emergency circumstances (moving to another school or severe illness), you are expected to **FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR COMMITMENT.**

Finally, marching season is an exciting time for the students. There are plenty of rehearsals, contests, football games, sectionals, etc. We do understand that this time commitment can be burdensome; however, we also realize that there is a price to pay for excellence. We hope to instill the ideals that achievement is worth the investment of hard work and of some sacrifice, that there is an inner peace and strength generated by the journey toward a worthwhile goal, and finally, that one achieves a sense of fulfillment and joy through learning and helping to support others.

Again, welcome to the program and we wish you success in all of your school endeavors.

Jason and Jill Shea
Band Directors

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FROM PERFORMANCE CANNOT BE MADE UP, AND GRADE REDUCTION WILL RESULT.

I acknowledge that I have read the grading policy and understand how student grades are determined in band

Parent_____ **Student**_____