

Honours Band Handbook

Onoway Jr/Sr High School



2015/2016 SEASON

...Keeping the Music Alive in our Community!...

Onoway High School Honours Band

Band Handbook & Expectations

Ms. E. Neufeld

Dear Parents and Band Members,

Congratulations on being accepted into the 2015/2016 Honours Band and becoming part of another season of musical learning, fun, and achievement in this talented ensemble! This year the band promises to be exciting, challenging, and rewarding once again! In order to successfully achieve these 3 goals it is imperative that each and every member contributes to their highest ability and possess the true “team spirit” we need. Remember: “*Nothing worth having comes easy*”. We must all work hard and work together to uphold our history of fine musicianship and excellence.

Who we are:

Whether you know this or not, you have been accepted into one of the most talented and hard-working teams in Alberta! The Honours Band is a group of extremely dedicated and passionate musicians who are all focused on the same set of goals. To continue to be a part of the Honours Band you will need to try hard, practice lots, and perform with professionalism and confidence at all times.

What we do:

The Honours Band is given many performance opportunities from playing at the Christmas Concert to playing at local and provincial adjudicated festivals. The band travels each year and frequently experiences master classes with professional musicians and guest conductors. When we are not travelling or performing, we are preparing, practicing, and rehearsing. Musicians in this group know that it takes lots of practicing and focus to move forward as a team.

When we rehearse:

The Honour Band rehearses **Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 7:15am SHARP**. Plan to arrive at the school by 7:00am to give your-self enough time to set up and warm up. Tuesday rehearsals will alternate between brass/perc. and woodwind each week. Weekly sectionals will happen every Friday at lunch with different sections each week (announced at Thursday’s rehearsal). Miss. Neufeld may schedule extra sectional rehearsals on Mon/Tues/or Wed lunch hours if need be. Notice will be given in those circumstances.

What we rehearse:

Rehearsals could include a warm up, tuning session, sight-reading, and playing of music selections for festivals, performances, and events. The music played in Honours Band is at a much higher level than music played in grade 8/9 band. It is more challenging, and much more interesting and exciting to play! Music will vary depending on upcoming events.

What we wear:

The Honours Band performs in black socks/stockings, black DRESS shoes, black DRESS pants (no jeans), white collared shirt, and a *beautiful, soft, cozy*, green sweater. Your sweater will be assigned to you after Camp Nakamun. It is your responsibility to launder it between every performance and keep it looking nice. Similarly to a sports team, we would like to positively represent our school, appear as one united team, and show the community who we are. For those reasons, failure to appear with the specified uniform may result in a student being pulled from a performance.

What we expect from you:

The Honours Band is an elite group of students who maintain their high level of discipline and musicianship by abiding by the following expectations:

1. **Attendance is mandatory**, and extremely important. **Do NOT come late**. Similar to a football team missing their quarterback, it is nearly impossible to rehearse when the 2nd trombone isn't there. We are only as strong as our least dedicated member, so do your part and be 100% dedicated. Each member of the Honour Band Team is valuable and important - Remember, that's why you're here! In the event that you are unable to attend a rehearsal, please follow these steps:
 - a) Notify your section leader. Discuss reason for absence with them.
 - b) Notify Miss. Neufeld.
 - c) "Make-up" your missed rehearsal on the VERY NEXT day at lunch.

*Each member may carry up to 2 absences at a time. If this number happens to exceed 2, further action will be taken and your future position in the Honour Band will be discussed with Miss. Neufeld. 99% of absences can be avoided if proper planning happens beforehand.

2. **Excellent Rehearsal Etiquette is expected at ALL times. DON'T TALK, LISTEN, and CONCENTRATE** on how your part fits in with the music. Many times your part will appear in another section's part. While Ms. Neufeld is working with another section, look at your music to see where you have that part too. This will save us countless hours of rehearsal time. ***There are times for fun, and times for serious concentration. The best musicians are able to easily toggle between both, and know when it is appropriate to do so.***
3. **Performances are mandatory**, and extremely important. A goalie who only shows up to practice and does not attend the games does not help the team win games. In addition, performances are an entirely different experience from rehearsal and are an integral part to your growth as a musician and person. Plus, they are fun!

Performances each season are not limited to, but include the following:

- a) Remembrance Day Ceremony for OHS (during school hours)
- b) Remembrance Day Ceremony for Onoway & Community (November 11th)
- c) Christmas Concert (December)
- d) Alberta International Band Festival in Edmonton (March)
- e) Annual Coffee House Fundraiser @ OHS (April/May)
- f) Music Monday Performance (May)
- g) Festival Tour Performances (April/May)
- h) Final Concert (June)

4. **Practicing/preparation** requires hard work and discipline. If you didn't know already, developing a practicing routine is the easiest and most effective way to practice at home. Having a practice schedule allows your body and mind to prepare for practicing and will often result in a more productive practice session. Being prepared for rehearsal includes the following:

- a) Arriving on-time with instrument, music, supplies
- b) Arriving with your music learned (you know the notes, rhythms, and dynamics)
- c) Sleeping well the night before to ensure that your brain is ready for the morning.

5. **Respect the hierarchy.** As you know, each section has a section leader and/or an assistant. If you do not hold one of these positions, **your job is to follow and support your section leader to the best of your ability.** Section leaders have experience and knowledge to share that is tremendously valuable. Regardless of how much you may like/unlike your section leader, it is important that you follow them. They have been chosen for good reasons and are working very hard to continuously make our band better. In addition, the section leaders are an extension of Miss. Neufeld. Often times they are used to pass information down from the director to the band in a more efficient manner.

6. **Laugh and have fun...OFTEN!** Groups that put \$5 into the bank each day get to celebrate together when that number reaches \$1000 and they make a withdrawal. We will joke often, laugh often, and shed tears of joy once in a while. Your experiences in this group will be entirely unique and special in so many ways. Your hard work and effort will pay off in ways you will not notice for years to come. ***It is my promise to you that I will do everything in my power to ensure growth, success, leadership, and fun within this dynamic group. Return that promise, and we will be unstoppable!***

Note: Anyone who is unwilling to fulfill these expectations for the betterment of the band and themselves, is not prepared to treat this course with the seriousness it demands and deserves.

If you are unsure about your ability to make these commitments I ask that you please withdraw from the group. If members or parents have any questions regarding the honours

band expectations, please do not hesitate to call me @ 780 967 2271 and I will gladly discuss them with you.

Teacher References:

Each HB member is required to submit the teacher references form at the end of this handbook. Since being involved in the group will mean missing some school, it is important that all students have their teachers' approval prior to joining. Students must ensure that academics come first and that they are keeping up in their classes. Failure to do so could result in the member being removed from trips and performances until caught up.

Cost:

It takes a great deal of money each year to support the Honours Band in all of its musically enriching endeavors. To help accomplish our goals, the school has instituted a **\$90.00 Honours Band Fee**. This fee is in addition to their class band fee (\$35.00) for a total of \$125.00 if your child is in both Class Band AND Honours Band. All monies generated through the Honours Band membership fees will go directly towards costs incurred by the band. **This fee is Due THURSDAY, October 8th 2015 by the end of the school day.** Payment of all band fees come directly to Ms. Neufeld. Failure to pay this fee will result in the student being withdrawn from the Honours Band. Thank you in advance for your attention to this financial commitment!

O.M.P.A.:

The Onoway Music Parents Association (OMPA) is a legal association consisting of ALL active Band Parents at Onoway High School. This includes Honours Band, Chamber Ensemble and Class Band Parents. By enrolling your child in band, you are automatically a member of this group. **Parents are always needed to help out either with executive rolls, or by volunteering your time.** Executive positions include:

President

Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Unofficial: Public Relations

Executive position holders must be able to attend ALL meetings. The OMPA helps serve the OHS Band Program in numerous ways including the following:

- Raise funds for new instruments & other equipment
- Reduce the cost of band trips and festivals
- Band trip supervision
- Run the Annual Coffee House
- Public Relations & Advertising of our events
- Bottle Drives
- Volunteer their time at numerous band events

\$50.00 Volunteer Deposit:

Each Honours Band family is required to submit a \$50.00 Post-Dated cheque made out to "OMPA". Recently implemented, the \$50 volunteer deposit is designed to encourage more

parents to help volunteer throughout the school year, thus spreading the workload out evenly among all band parents. Each parent is required to fulfill their volunteer hours. Once fulfilled, your cheque will be returned to you, or shredded. If the volunteer hours are not fulfilled by the end of the school year, the cheque will be deposited and used towards the band program. ***If the cheque is not handed in, the child/children of that family will not receive a subsidized Camp Nakamun Fee and will be required to pay the full amount of the camp.***

The date of the first OMPA meeting is Tuesday, October 6th @ 7:00 PM in the school cafeteria. Parents of students in band are ***STRONGLY encouraged*** to attend these meetings in order to have input into your child's music education, help make financial decisions for the betterment of the band, and assist in fundraising activities to reduce trip costs for your child. Regular meetings of the OMPA are held on the first Tuesday of every second month. With the vibrant support of this group of parents, our band will be able to carry out our musical goals!

Trips:

Each year the Honours Band works hard to showcase our work at provincial or national festivals. These festivals take place all over Alberta and Canada. Each festival performance is a wonderful opportunity for students to grow further as a performer, musician, and teammate. All festivals we attend are designed for school-aged students and are geared towards enhancing their musical education. Past trips have taken this group to destinations as close as Red Deer, and as far away as Toronto or Ottawa. As expected, each trip comes at a cost. Cost of the trip will always depend on the Festival and the Destination. Costs generally range between \$600 - \$1500. The OMPA works VERY hard to reduce the cost of these trips for all band students, however members are encouraged to work and find odd jobs throughout the year to help pay for their trip. We've never left anyone behind yet!

Due to the educational value in each trip, all trips are considered mandatory for each member. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns regarding travel you may have: 780 967 2271.

Remind Texts:

Want to know what's coming up? Want to be notified when special circumstances arise? Ms. Neufeld uses the Remind Texts to communicate regularly with members and parents. The program allows the teacher to send one-way text messages to students and parents without the exchange of personal phone numbers. Common uses include:

- Rehearsal date changes/cancelations
- Due dates approaching for assignments, fundraisers, hoodie orders, etc.
- Reminders for performances
- Notify of any news regarding the band

The more who use it, the better it works! Instructions to subscribe are listed below (If you don't find them useful, you may unsubscribe from these texts at any point by replying "leave"). If you are in more than one band, feel free to subscribe to both.

Text the following MESSAGE(S) to **587-409-1225**

Grade 8 Band - @ohsband8
Grade 9 Band - @ohsband9
High School Band - @ohshsb
Honours Band - @honoursba
Percussion (all grades) - @ohsper2014

You will now receive helpful texts and reminders, Thanks!

Membership Contract:

Please carefully fill out and return the attached contract (keeping this letter for future reference). No student will be officially considered an Honours Band Member until the following contract has been **completed and returned to Ms. Neufeld before or on Friday October 8th**. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in meeting this deadline.

I look forward to a vibrant and musically fulfilling year with you all!

Sincerely,

Ms. E. Neufeld
(Chick with the Stick)

-----Return by Thursday October 8thth, 2014 -----
(Don't forget! – your \$90.00 HB fee is due at the same time!)

This is to verify that I _____ Parent/Guardian of _____ have read and understood (**and also ensure that my son/daughter has read and understood**) the contents of the above document explaining the expectations and attendance policy for all Honours Band members.

For General Music 10/20/30 Students & Parents:

I _____ Parent/Guardian of _____ also understand that failure to adhere to these expectations when enrolled in "General Music 10/20/30" will result in your son/daughter being withdrawn from the course and no credit shall be earned on their report card. *Senior High students are encouraged to VERY CAREFULLY read the course outline for General Music 10/20/30 and ensure that they are able to commit to all aspects of the course in order to earn credit.*

By signing this contract and becoming an Honours Band Member, **ALL** members are committing to participate in **ALL** rehearsals and **ALL** performances. Here goes another outstanding year as one of the top Alberta Bands!

Student Name (printed) : _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name(s): _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Phone # _____ - _____ - _____

Parent Email _____ (*Mandatory*)

Address (including postal code):

If you are a grade 10, 11 or 12 student, are you going to take Honours Band for credit? (I.e: you must be enrolled in General Music 10/20/30 through Ms. Lind in the office, or plan on doing so).

YES

NO

Onoway High School Honours Band Teacher References

Full Name: _____ Grade: _____

Members: Please speak to your teachers about joining the Honours Band. It is your responsibility to advise them of your absences for band and make a commitment to stay caught up in class. You must receive 4 teacher references in order to complete your Honours Band enrollment.

Teachers: Please sign to give your consent for this students' involvement in Honours Band. If there are any concerns, please list them here or email me directly. Thank you in advance!

Reference #1

Teacher Name: _____ Subject: _____

Comments: _____

Reference #2

Teacher Name: _____ Subject: _____

Comments: _____

Reference #3

Teacher Name: _____ Subject: _____

Comments: _____

Reference #4

Teacher Name: _____ Subject: _____

Comments: _____
