

École Charleswood School Band Program

2025-2026 Handbook



- The Eastman Wind Ensemble

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Welcome/Welcome Back!

I am honored to have the opportunity to work with your young musician, and look forward to an exciting year of music education at ÉCS!

When you have a moment, please thoroughly review all of the information in this handbook – some changes have been made since last year.

An especially important section of this handbook is “[Required Supplies](#)”. Please note that ***all Band students will need to provide their own copy of Essential Elements Book 1***. Returning students in Grade 7 and Grade 8 should have a copy of this method book from last year – if not, or if they have switched instruments (this requires advance approval from Mr. Boch), it will need to be repurchased.

Band supplies can be purchased online from Amazon, or at St. John’s Music (1330 Portage Ave.), Long & McQuade Music (1845 Pembina Hwy.), or Accord Music (1373 Pembina Hwy.). Before visiting any of these stores, please consider calling ahead to ensure that they have the item(s) you require in stock.

If you have questions or concerns with any of the information in this handbook, or with any other matter pertaining to your young musician’s musical education at École Charleswood School, please don’t hesitate to get in touch at any time using the contact information provided on [page 1](#).

Best Regards,



Mr. J. Boch,
Band Director,
École Charleswood School



- The Count Basie Orchestra

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Required Supplies (For All Students)

Parents/guardians are asked to please ensure that students have the following supplies for Band:

- A **quality instrument** (the Yamaha student model brand is preferred) in **perfect working condition**, which is **clearly labelled** (a luggage tag is ideal) with their first name, last name, and homeroom.
- The **Band method book “Essential Elements Book 1”**. This method book is sold for a variety of instruments, so it is important that parents/guardians purchase the one that corresponds with their student’s instrument. All returning Grade 7 and Grade 8 students should still have this book from last year; if not, it will need to be repurchased.
- An ample supply of sharpened **pencils** (any other type of writing utensil is not appropriate for Band).
- A portable wire music stand **is recommended** for home practice and **required** for Camp Arnes.
- Grade 7 and Grade 8 Band students **may** be asked to purchase “Essential Elements Book 2” at some point during the year as well. Please do not feel the need to purchase this book in advance, as it may not be required.

Required Supplies (Woodwinds)

Flute

- Cleaning rod
- Cleaning swab

Oboe

- 2 custom-made reeds OR 2 store-bought reeds
- A reed case (pegs or sponges) that will hold 2 or more reeds
- Pull-through cleaning swab

Clarinet & Bass Clarinet

- 10 reeds (beginners strength 2.5, 2nd/3rd year players strength 3)
 - Grades 7 & 8, please avoid using the orange-box Rico brand
- Cork grease
- Pull-through cleaning swab
- Reed guard (optional)

Saxophone

- 10 reeds
 - Grades 7 & 8, please avoid using the orange-box Rico brand
- Cork grease
- Pull-through cleaning swab OR Pad saver (both of these are for alto and tenor saxophone only)
- Reed guard (optional)

Required Supplies (Brass/Percussion)

Trumpet

- Valve oil & tuning slide grease
- Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- Cleaning snake (optional)

Horn

- **Rotary** valve oil & tuning slide grease
- Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- Cleaning snake (optional)

Trombone

- Slide cream & spray bottle (no valve oil, please)
- Tuning slide grease
- Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- Cleaning snake (optional)

Euphonium

- Valve oil & tuning slide grease
- Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- Cleaning snake (optional)

Tuba

- Valve oil & tuning slide grease
- Mouthpiece brush (optional)
- Cleaning snake (optional)

Percussion

- Supplies provided by ÉCS

Pembina Trails School Division Instrument Rental Agreement & Fee

Parents/guardians of students who play oboe, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, French horn, euphonium, tuba, and percussion will likely be renting these instruments from the Pembina Trails.

At some point during the first week of school, parents/guardians of students who play the above-mentioned instruments will receive a copy of the Pembina Trails School Division Instrument Rental Agreement form, and instructions on how to submit the yearly instrument rental fee.

Please note that it will not be possible for students to have access to Pembina Trails instruments until the Instrument Rental Agreement and corresponding rental fee have both been submitted.

Instrument, Mouthpiece, & Music Folder Storage

Students are welcome to leave their instrument in the Band room (in its designated place) both during the school day, and on weekday evenings when they are unable to practice. **Students are not permitted to leave their instruments in the Band room over (long) weekends or holidays** (this does not apply to baritone saxophone, French horn, euphonium, and tuba players, who already have an instrument at home).

Generally, the Band room will be open before school at 8:35 AM, and after school until 3:45 PM for students to drop-off or pick-up their instruments. If, for any reason, the Band room is locked, students are asked to refrain from leaving their instrument unattended in the hallway outside of the Band room, as it could potentially be damaged or stolen.

Students who rent their instrument and mouthpiece from Pembina Trails are asked to please store their mouthpiece in their backpack or locker, and not in the Band room.

Responsibility for Damaged, Lost, or Stolen Instruments

Parents/guardians of students who play instruments that have not been rented from Pembina Trails are asked to **please be aware that both ÉCS and Pembina Trails do not have insurance or any plan that will cover damage, loss, or theft of privately-owned/rented equipment. As a result, ÉCS and Pembina Trails are unable to accept responsibility for instruments that have been damaged, lost, or stolen.**

With the above in mind, parents/guardians of students who play instruments that have not been rented from Pembina Trails are encouraged to investigate the possibility of adding the instrument to their personal insurance, such as their homeowner's policy.

Parents/guardians of students who play instruments that have been rented from Pembina Trails are encouraged to refer to the Pembina Trails School Division Rental Agreement Policy for information concerning damage, loss, or theft of divisional instruments.

Sheet Music

Throughout the year, students will be rehearsing and performing a variety of pieces from the ÉCS sheet music library.

Whether students are provided with photocopies or original (non-photocopied) sheet music, that music is the property of ÉCS, must be treated with care, and must be returned upon request.

More specific to care, students must avoid bending or ripping the sheet music, and must ensure that any markings are made exclusively with pencil. Before handing-back the sheet music, pencil markings need to be erased, minor bends need to be straightened, and minor rips need to be repaired with clear scotch tape.

Although ÉCS will cover the cost of replacing sheet music due to normal wear and tear, parents/guardians will incur the replacement cost of sheet music that is abused or misplaced due to negligence on the part of the student.

Band-Related Payments

The website “Permission Click” will be used, whenever possible, to collect Band-related payments.

Parents/guardians who have any questions or concerns with regard to Permission Click are encouraged to contact Mr. Boch at their convenience.

Band Homework (Individual Practice)

Individual practice is every Band student’s homework, and is necessary for their continued musical development. It is also arguably some of the most important homework that they will be assigned by any of their teachers, as ***it directly affects every other student in their class***.

All students are unique and, as a result, will require differing amounts of individual practice in order to be able to participate fully and meaningfully in the music-making process. In general, students should be able to explain to their parent(s)/guardian(s) what we have been working on in class, and should be able to successfully demonstrate, with consistency, their understanding of those skills and concepts on their instrument. If they are unable to do so, more individual practice is required.

Parents/guardians are asked to please be aware that students in middle school might not be intrinsically motivated to practice on their own. This is not a sign that they do not enjoy Band, rather, it is a sign that they require support, encouragement, praise, and, possibly, some firm insistence to complete their homework.

Practice Tips

- Practice as often as possible – ideally, on the days you eat. ☺
- Find a quiet place where you can concentrate and, ideally, you can see yourself in a mirror.
- Use your portable wire music stand and, if your instrument will allow you to do so, stand-up.
- Figure-out what you want/need to work-on before you begin; if you have trouble with this, think back to your last Band class – was there something that you felt you could have done better?
- Begin by working on your tone quality – use your Concert Bb Major Scale, and practice holding notes with a “nice” sound...really listen to yourself and adjust as you are playing!
- If you forget how your instrument should sound, listen to some professional recordings on iTunes or on YouTube – this will help you to get the right sound into your mind.
- Move-on to the goal that you set for yourself before you began practicing – be patient with yourself, work in small chunks, slow to fast, low to high, soft to loud, etc.
- Finish your practice session with something that is fun for you to play.

Manitoba K-8 Music Curriculum & Assessment

The four essential learning areas of the Manitoba K-8 Music Curriculum can be found below, as can their approximate weightings. As Band students spend the majority of their time making music on their instruments, it follows logically that “Making” receives the most weight.

- Making (70%)
 - Winter Band Concert (17.5%)
 - Summer Band Concert (17.5%)
 - Rehearsals & Playing Assessments (35%)
- Responding (20%)
- Creating (5%)
- Connecting (5%)

If a student has a scheduling conflict that is **unique, significant, and unavoidable** and, provided **as much advance notice is given as possible**, they may, at the discretion of the Band Director in consultation with school administration, be excused from the Winter Band Concert and/or the Summer Band Concert.

- Students who are excused from concerts will be required to complete a make-up assignment which will incorporate public performance.

Students who miss a concert and are not excused will receive a mark of 0 for the concert in question.

Please see the table below for some examples of what would and would not constitute an excused absence.

<u>Examples of Excused Absences</u>	<u>Examples of Non-Excused Absences</u>
Out-of-province family vacation	Going out for supper
Championship sporting event (i.e. gold medal game)	Practice or regular season game
Solo piano recital	Piano lesson, guitar lesson, haircut
Dance recital	Audience member at sporting/performing arts event
Funeral	Need to study or complete homework
Moderate or severe sickness/illness	Mild illness (scratchy throat, for example)

Late Assignments & Re-doing Assignments

Due-dates for assignments will be clearly communicated to students, and it is their responsibility to complete them on-time, and to the very best of their ability.

With the exception of a concert missed due to an unexcused absence, **students are both welcome and encouraged to redo any assignment** on which they feel that they could earn a higher grade.

Communication Concerning Academic Achievement & Learning Behaviors

Academic achievement and learning behavior updates with regard to Band will be provided for parents/guardians at tri-conferences, and on report cards. Parents/guardians who would like any additional academic achievement and learning behavior updates at times other than those specifically mentioned above are encouraged to call or email at their convenience.

Extra Help

Although learning an instrument is a lot of fun, it can sometimes be challenging. With this in mind, students are always welcome to speak to Mr. Boch to setup some extra help.

Band Concerts & Concert Dress Code

Band concerts are deeply foundational aspect of the Band experience. They are also a form of collective summative assessment and, in terms of importance, they are 100% analogous to exams. With the above in mind, **all Band students are required to attend all Band concerts from beginning to end, and participate to the very best of their ability.**

Unless otherwise mentioned, the **student** concert dress code for all ÉCS Band Program performances is:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Top: | Plain black long or short-sleeved collared dress shirt OR
Plain black polo shirt OR plain black dress blouse |
| Bottom: | Plain black dress pants OR plain black dress skirt & leggings
Black dress socks
Black dress shoes |

Band Field Trips

For budgeting purposes, the Camp Arnes Band Workshops (Grade 6/7) will cost approximately \$225, while the Cantando Band Festival in Edmonton (Grade 8) will cost approximately \$875.

To be eligible to attend these and all other Band field trips, students must:

- Demonstrate consistently acceptable behavior at ÉCS.
- Demonstrate a level of proficiency (and self-awareness) on their instrument that allows them to participate in the experience in question without significant detriment to their ensemble.
- Have not been referred to the office for major disciplinary concerns (assault, theft, drug/alcohol use, frequent skipping of school, persistent/willful defiance, etc.).

In as much as possible, parents/guardians of students who do not meet the criteria outlined above will be notified well in advance. For students who are having difficulty in meeting one or both of the first two criteria, a plan can be put in place to assist them in doing so. Students who do not meet the third criteria, however, will likely not be permitted to attend. The final decision as to whether a student who is “at-risk” will be able to attend a given Band field trip will be made by the Band director in consultation with school administration.

Switching Instruments - Including Grade 6 Band Specialty Instrument Auditions

Oboe (1 chair), saxophone (~4-7 chairs), French horn (~2-4 chairs), and percussion (~1-2 chairs) are all considered to be “specialty instruments” and are auditioned.

They are called specialty instruments because their level of difficulty and their soloistic nature demand that they be paired with students who are musically able, hard-working, highly-focused, and resilient.

Near the end of the school year, all Grade 6 Band students will have the opportunity to put their names forward for consideration in terms of switching to one of the specialty instruments mentioned above (with the exception of percussion, which becomes available at the start of Grade 8, rather than the start of Grade 7).

The following factors will determine which students are selected to move to these specialty instruments:

- Level of proficiency on current Band instrument
- Level of focus during Band class
- Practice habits
- Level of comfort in terms of playing individually
- General level of interest, enthusiasm, and resiliency

Students who are selected to move to a specialty instrument must:

- Commit to stay in Band until they leave ÉCS
- Take a minimum of 4 private lessons on their new instrument with an instructor approved by Mr. Boch
- Commit to full participation in Grade 8 Jazz Ensemble (saxophones)

Band students who are new to École Charleswood School, and who have already been playing one of the specialty instruments mentioned above in their former Band program will, naturally, have the opportunity to continue-on with that instrument. Students may also be permitted to play percussion in other situations as dictated by a variety of circumstances.

Switching Instruments (All Other Instruments)

Apart from students who are selected to move to a speciality instrument, **switching instruments (either during the year or over the summer) is, in almost all cases, not permissible.**

Having said this, if a student is experiencing significant physical discomfort as a result of playing their instrument, or is working as hard as they can, yet experiencing very little success, an instrument switch may, **as a last resort**, be considered. **All instrument switches need to be approved in advance by Mr. Boch.**

Band Room Rules

- Be on-time and fully-prepared (see [“Required Supplies”](#))
- Water only; no other food, non-water drinks, candy (gum), etc. are allowed
- Wait your turn to talk and/or play your instrument
- Play only your instrument, and nobody else’s – this includes the percussion instruments
- Clean-up after yourself

Communicating Concerns (For Parents/Guardians) – Taken from the [PTSD Standard of Behaviour Brochure](#)

“In the event that a parent/guardian disagrees with the way in which a teacher manages a situation that involves their child, there is an established process for communication and appeal. It is the division’s belief that complaints are best resolved as close to their origin as possible, ***beginning with the teacher***, and then administration in the school.” With this established process in mind, parents/guardians are kindly asked to please direct any questions or concerns regarding the ÉCS Band Program directly/solely to Mr. Boch. It is exceptionally rare that a concern cannot be fully addressed in this manner.

Calendar of Band Events – All overnight field trips are subject to board-office approval

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Fri. Nov. 7	TBD	ÉCS	Remembrance Day Service	G8 Band
Wed. / Thu. Nov. 12 & 13	-----	TBD	MY Honour Band	Select G8 Band Students
Thu. Dec. 11	6:30 PM	ÉCS	Winter Band Concert	All Bands
Thu. Feb. 19	TBD	RBC Conv. Center	Winnipeg Concert Band Festival	G8 Band
Thu. Mar. 5	TBD	CCFM	Winnipeg Jazz Band Festival	ÉCS Jazz Ensemble
Apr. 12-16	-----	Edmonton, AB.	Cantando Band Festival	G8 Band
Mon. / Tue. May 11 & 12	-----	Camp Arnes	G6 Band Workshops	G7 Band
Tue. / Wed. May 12 & 13	-----	Camp Arnes	G7 Band Workshops	G6 Band
Thu. Jun. 4	6:30 PM	ÉCS	Summer Band Concert	All Bands

** In the event of any scheduling changes, parents/guardians will be given as much advance notice as possible. **

Closing Thought

During conversations with Band parents/guardians, many mention that their memories of middle and high school Band were among their most cherished from that time of their lives. With this mind, I’m looking forward to working with you to create an equally amazing experience for your child(ren)!