

Band and Strings Handbook

2024-2025



Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the NVSD Band and Strings Program!

In this handbook you will find important information for the year. This handbook is for both parents and students, please read this information carefully as it will help with the success of your musical experience.

2024-2025 Band and Strings Weekly Rehearsal Schedule:

Please visit our [website](#) to find the schedule for your band or strings classes at your school.

Health and Safety

Our first priority in everything we do, is to care for ourselves and each other by ensure we are safe and well. All Band and Strings classes will be strictly following the [Provincial Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#).

We ask that all students participating in our Band and Strings program:

- complete a daily health check before coming to school. Parents/caregivers and students can utilize the provincial [K-12 Health Check](#) app for daily assessment of symptoms.
- respect others' personal space.
- Please carefully follow your teachers' instructions with any assigned seating or organizational arrangements.
- wash diligently or sanitize your hands:
 - upon entry and exit
 - before and after eating
 - before and after handling shared objects
 - after using the washroom
 - after sneezing or coughing into hands
 - whenever your hands are visible dirty.
- label all of your personal items to discourage accidental sharing.
- place all personal belongings in the designated place that your teacher has assigned to you.

- to be extra careful of your spit valve! If your instrument requires a dribble cloth, you are asked to use paper towel. At the end of your class, you are to dispose of the paper towel immediately, then wash your hands.
- teachers will cover instrument specific cleaning instructions with students.

Being on Time

You are part of team . . . we like to call it an ensemble! It is SO important to be on time for you and for your ensemble 😊

This is what being on time looks like:

- Arrive ten minutes early.
- Give yourself enough time to sanitize your hands upon entry.
- Set up your stand and chair. All chairs will be spaced two meters apart.
- Set up your instrument.
- Check that you have all equipment at your stand, including your pencil, extra reeds, dribble cloth (paper towel) for brass players, and water bottle if you need a drink during rehearsal.
- Warm up on your instrument
- Classes will always start on time with attendance and then a group warm up.

NVSD Band and Strings Code of Conduct

Compassion in our thoughts, words and actions

- Be kind to everyone during band class
- Support those who need some extra help
- Help others feel like they belong, we are all on the same team
- Arrive prepared and practiced so we can rehearse effectively
- Always try your best in band class. This will help us work as a team to achieve great musical goals
- Making mistakes is part of learning and growing as a musician. Don't be too tough on yourself or others

- Always be open-minded and ready to learn

Other guidelines to help you in your Band and Strings classes

- Be safe around the instruments, and other people
- You are responsible for your instrument at all times. Instruments are expensive to repair or replace
- Respect others before and during classes
- Do not talk or play when the teacher is talking or conducting
- Be responsible for your personal items and stands and chairs. Make sure everything is put away properly at the end of the band class. Everyone is responsible for packing up their chair and stand
- Be prepared before for class:
 - Make sure to bring your music. You will not be able to share this year.
 - Homework is expected to be completed. Reviewing and practicing is an important part of a musician's development
 - Strings players, make sure you have your rosin, end pin stopper (cellos), and shoulder rest (violin and viola).

Performances

All Band and Strings students will have the opportunity to celebrate their music! Traditionally, the ensembles perform at various locations and festivals such as the Band and Strings Music Festival, the Zone concert series, or local school events and assemblies. This school year, students will be sharing their music in many ways, including sound recordings and videos. Your teacher will be sharing specific details on how you will be sharing your music this year! To note, sensitivity to consent and personal choice are placed first.

Performance Expectations:

Performances are an important part of learning for band and strings students, and we hope students will make all virtual concerts during the year. We will do our best to get you the performance dates as early as possible.

The Band or Strings ensemble is a team. When one of the team members is not present, it means that the ensemble does not sound the same. We could be missing an important part of the music when a student misses a concert, and this will affect all the members of the group.

Students who miss concerts are missing a valuable opportunity to share in the performance and end-product of the band and strings experience. There is a sense of pride and excitement when the team performs.

We do understand that there are some extenuating situations (such as illness or vacation) that might require students to miss or come late to a concert, but please notify your teacher and do your best to make all performances.

Attire for concerts will be communicated before each performance.

Practice Expectations:

Band and Strings is a discipline that requires individual practice at home in order to improve. It is strongly encouraged to make a habit of practicing at home regularly. The more often you practice, the better you will sound. This will make playing easier and more fun!

Parents are an important part of the practice routine. Please take the time to engage with your child and encourage practicing.

- Encourage your child by asking to hear a piece of music at the end of a practice session.
- Give positive feedback when improvements have been made.
- Set specific times for practicing during the week.
- Create a positive practice space that promotes proper posture (sitting or standing) and creates separation from other activities and noise for focus
- Check out variations of the music online and enjoy listening to the music as a family!

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook.

Please contact your Band and/or Strings teachers
if you have any further questions.

