

Mexico High School Bands

2023-2024 Handbook



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Note from the Director

Welcome to the Mexico High School band program! I am truly excited to have you as a member of the group this year and I will do everything I can to ensure that you have a positive, fun, and musically meaningful experience. This handbook has been established to provide you with a comprehensive source of information about the instrumental music program here at the high school. Please take the time to become familiar with the information included. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the school by phone, e-mail, or in person. Communication is the key to success!

This year we will continue to add new and exciting performing opportunities to the schedule alongside many longstanding and traditional events. We will also build on the student-centered foundation established last year, in which students will have a greater voice in determining individual and ensemble goals, performance literature, performance types, grading policy, and classroom expectations. Lastly, we will continue to redevelop the leadership program in hopes of enhancing student-directed ownership of learning and improving the ensemble experience for all members.

Brian T. Carnes, director

Mexico High School **Performing Arts Mission**

Provide students with the knowledge, skills, discipline, and values to become lifelong participants in music.

Mexico High School **Performing Arts Vision**

Recognize that every Mexico Academy & Central Schools (MACS) student possesses the ability and deserves the opportunity to participate in music.

Mexico High School **Performing Arts Core Beliefs/Student Outcomes**

- Music is a fundamental form of expressive communication for every student.
- Music is a means to develop a well-balanced individual through positive group experience.
- Every student should have the opportunity to develop their own innate creativity and learn to respect the creative expressions of others.
- Every student should acquire the skills of music reading, critical listening, and performing through those techniques required of instrumentalists and vocalists.
- Every student should be sensitive to the value of music in our daily lives and contribute to the musical life of their school and community.
- Every student should be able to relate music to other content areas, fields of study, and occupations.
- The path to achieving our mission and vision is through providing students rigorous and sequential standards-based instruction.

2023-2024 High School Bands Schedule (Tentative)

More information about events can be found at <https://mexicohsbands.weebly.com/calendar.html>, which is updated weekly.

Fall Concert – Avery Skinner (Mexico High School) Auditorium (Everyone)
-Tuesday, October 17, 2023 – 7:00pm

Onondaga Community College Music Student for a Day – Syracuse, NY (Participating Students)
-Friday, November 3, 2023 – All Day

JROTC Marine Corps Birthday Ball – Mexico High School Gymnasium (Jazz Ensemble)
-Thursday, November 9, 2023 – 5:30pm

NYSSMA Zone 4 Senior High Area All-State – John C. Birdlebough High School – Phoenix, NY (Selected Students)
-Friday & Saturday, November 17 & 18, 2023 (Rehearsals and Performance) – All Day

NYSSMA Conference All-State – Rochester, NY (Selected Students)
-Thursday, November 30 – Sunday, December 3, 2023 (Rehearsals and Performance) – All Day

Holiday Concert – Avery Skinner (Mexico High School) Auditorium (Everyone)
-Wednesday, December 6, 2023 – 7:00pm

All-County Auditions – Paul V. Moore High School – Central Square, NY (Participating Students)
-Saturday, December 9, 2023 – Times TBA (Morning)

Symphoria Home for the Holidays – Syracuse, NY (Participating Students)
-Saturday, December 16, 2023 – All Day

OCMEA Scholarship Auditions – Avery Skinner (Mexico HS) Auditorium (Eligible Participating Seniors)
-Wednesday, January 3, 2024 – Times TBA (Afternoon)
-Snow Date, Thursday, January 4, 2024 – Times TBA (Afternoon)

OCMEA All-County Band Festival – Paul V. Moore High School – Central Square, NY (Selected Students)
-Friday & Saturday, January 12 & 13, 2024 (Rehearsals and Performance) – All Day

8th Grade Recruiting Day – Sheldon K. Blank (HS) Band Room (Jazz Ensemble)
-Friday, January 26, 2024 – Morning

NYSSMA Zone 4 Junior High Area All-State – Mexico Middle School (Selected Students)
-Friday & Saturday, February 2 & 3, 2024 (Rehearsals and Performance) – All Day

Fonda-Fultonville Jazz Festival – Fonda-Fultonville High School – Fonda, NY (Jazz Ensemble)
-Thursday, February 15, 2024 – All Day

Syracuse Crunch vs. Toronto Marlies – Upstate Medical University Arena – Syracuse, NY (Jazz Ensemble)
-Friday, March 1, 2024 – 7:00pm

2023-2024 High School Bands Schedule (Tentative)

Musical – Avery Skinner (Mexico High School) Auditorium (Cast, Crew, and Pit Band)

-Thursday - Saturday, March 7-9, 2024 – 7:00pm

Music in Our Schools Month Concert I – Mexico Middle School Gymnasium (Jazz Ensemble)

-Thursday, March 14, 2024 – 6:00pm

OCMEA All-County Orchestra Festival – Oswego High School – Oswego, NY (Selected Students)

-Friday & Saturday, March 22 & 23, 2024 (Rehearsals and Performance) – All Day

Cabaret Concert – Location TBD (Everyone)

-Tuesday, April 9, 2024 – Time TBA

NYSSMA Major Organization Festival (Host) – Mexico Middle School (Everyone)

- Tuesday & Wednesday, April 16 & 17, 2024 – Times TBA During Day

Spring Concert/Senior Night – Avery Skinner (Mexico High School) Auditorium (Everyone)

-Monday, May 13, 2024 – 6:00pm

NYSSMA Solo & Ensemble Festival – Mexico Middle School (Participating Students)

-Friday & Saturday, May 17 & 18, 2024 – Times TBA

Mexico Memorial Day Parade, Ceremony, and Picnic (Marching Band)

-Monday, May 27, 2024, Rehearsal 8:00am, Parade 10:00am, Picnic 11:00am

Sherburne Pageant of Bands Jazz & Small Ensembles – S-E High School - Sherburne, NY (Jazz, Small Ensembles)

-Thursday OR Friday, May 30 OR 31, 2024 – Times TBA

Sherburne Pageant of Bands Concert & Marching Bands – S-E High School - Sherburne, NY (Everyone)

- Saturday, June 1, 2024 – Times TBA

Mexico High School Graduation (Graduation Ensemble)

-Friday, June 28, 2024 – 7:00pm

Afternoon/Evening Rehearsals:

-Drumline, Tiger Marching Band, Musical Pit Ensemble, and Pep Band rehearsals generally occur after school and in the evenings and are largely determined by student availability.

Fundraisers

World's Finest Chocolate Wednesday, September 13 th - until	Citrus Fruit Wednesday, November 1 st – Friday, December 1 st
Pie Monday, October 2 nd – Monday, October 16 th	Utica Coffee Monday, December 4 th – Monday, December 18 th
	Others as announced. . .

Instrumental Ensembles at Mexico High School

Symphonic Band

Symphonic Band is open to all woodwind, brass, double bass, and percussion students who meet course prerequisites. The ensemble comprehensively engages in activities that align with New York State and National music standards pertaining to wind band literature, music theory, music history, sight reading skills, ear training, and effective individual and ensemble practice and rehearsal skills. Students grow as educated musicians both individually and collectively through performing NYSSMA Levels III, IV, and other literature encompassing a wide variety of composers and styles. Students are required to attend all performances, rehearsals, and weekly lessons. *Symphonic Band is also available for "Honors" credit. Those who wish to take advantage of this opportunity must satisfy all Symphonic Band requirements, additional "Honors" requirements as outlined in the Honors Symphonic Band Application linked below, and participate in Marching Band.*

Jazz Ensemble

Instrumental Jazz Ensemble is open to all students who meet course prerequisites. Concurrent enrollment in Symphonic Band is required for all students. Piano, guitar, bass and drum students' participation is based on director approval. The ensemble comprehensively engages in activities that align with New York State and National music standards pertaining to jazz and other contemporary music, music theory, music history, sight reading skills, ear training, and effective individual and ensemble practice and rehearsal skills. Students grow as educated musicians both individually and collectively through performing NYSSMA levels III, IV, and other literature encompassing a wide variety of composers and styles. Students are required to attend all performances, rehearsals, and weekly lessons.

Tiger Marching Band

The Marching Band is the key performing group in many events and celebrations, allowing our students to showcase community involvement. Concurrent enrollment in Symphonic Band Ensemble is required for all students. Additional afternoon/evening rehearsals will be scheduled prior to performances on an as needed basis. Students will be encouraged to participate and those who do will be afforded extra travel and performance opportunities and other benefits. *Marching Band is not required for participation in Symphonic Band. However, students who elect to participate in Marching Band must attend at least 85% of scheduled after school and evening Marching Band rehearsals, which will count towards their Weekly Participation and quarterly averages. The student must attend ALL scheduled Marching Band performances, which will count towards their Performance (test grade) and quarterly averages.*

Drumline

Drumline functions as a component of Tiger Marching Band. As well as meeting the requirements for "Tiger Marching Band" above, Drumline is a requirement for percussionists who are members of the marching band and/or Honors Symphonic Band. Other instrumentalists may participate if they are satisfying their responsibilities on their primary instrument(s). This group allows students to explore literature, techniques, and performance practices that are specific to the marching and percussive arts.

Small Brass/Woodwind/Percussion Ensembles

Small Brass, Woodwind, and Percussion Ensembles typically meet during students' regularly scheduled lessons and allow exploration of literature, techniques, and performance practices specific to their instrumentation. These groups are generally open to any combination of instruments and perform at events such as concerts, NYSSMA Solo & Ensemble Festival, competitions, and others.

Musical Pit Ensemble

The Musical Pit Ensemble operates as a part of the yearly spring musical production. The ensemble make up is determined by the required instrumentation of the show. The schedule of the ensemble is at the discretion of the show director, assistant director, and pit director, and concurrent enrollment in a school ensemble is required.

Pep Band

Pep Band is open to all students. The pep band performs at select athletic games.

Grading Policy

Performances: 35%

Students are expected to attend all performances. Performances constitute part of the student's responsibility to the ensemble and should be considered an assessment (test) on the prepared literature.

Participation: 35%

Students are expected to attend all classroom rehearsals with the necessary items (instrument, accessories, folder, music, pencil, etc.). Students are graded on engagement, effort, attitude, preparation, and individual and team growth from rehearsal to rehearsal.

Lessons: 20%

Lessons are the foundation of the performance curriculum and an essential instructional element to the development of a student's individual and ensemble technique, musicality, and ability. Students' musical growth is assessed through their attendance, preparation, and execution at each lesson. Students are required to complete an electronic Lesson Log and Evaluation each marking week to monitor their progress.

Lessons are held for half a block once per week on a rotating schedule. This is meant to minimize the amount of time a student will miss any given class. Make-up lessons are offered periodically each quarter in case the initial scheduled lesson is missed for any reason. Students must sign up with the director for a make-up lesson ahead of time. This rotational lesson schedule is a practice accepted by all staff of the Mexico Central School District.

For the 2023-2024 School Year, students will receive one quarterly lesson grade based on the scale below.

5+ Lessons – 100
4 Lessons – 90
3 Lessons – 80
2 Lessons – 70
1 Lesson – 65
0 Lessons – 0

Quizzes/Other Projects: 10%

Occasional quizzes and other small projects may be given at the sole discretion of the director. These assignments are established just before or at the beginning of the marking period and will be related to short and/or long-term ensemble goals.

Final Exam

A Final Examination measures student growth over the course of the school year and is required for every student enrolled in Symphonic Band. It represents and will be calculated as one-fifth of the final overall average for the school year. Students can satisfy this requirement by performing at NYSSMA Solo & Ensemble Festival, completing a one-on-one audition with the director, meeting the points requirement outlined for Honors Symphonic Band, or through alternate assignment at the discretion of the director.

Extra Credit Opportunities include:

Extra Credit will be based on ensemble needs and available to deserving students on a case-by-case basis. All outlined course requirements must be satisfied before extra credit will be considered. Course requirements cannot be also used as extra credit. Points are added to the total average.

- Positive participation in performances of extra instrumental/vocal groups
- Private Lessons or extra lessons on school performing instrument
- Conference All-State, Area All-State, All-County, and Solo & Ensemble
- Allegro Youth Ensembles, Syracuse Youth Symphony, Syracuse University Honor Band Program
- Other opportunities at the discretion of the director

Other Requirements and Expectations

Attendance

Attendance expected and required at all performances, rehearsals, and lessons. Missing these components will affect your ability to successfully fulfill the requirements of the course.

Sudden illness or family emergencies are understandably beyond the control of the individual student. In such instances, notification by both the student and a parent/guardian before the rehearsal or performance is expected and appreciated. This enables the director to reassign responsibilities and make other adjustments for the absence as necessary. **In the event of a missed performance, it is the student's responsibility to coordinate and fulfill all requirements of the make-up assignment. This assignment must include a written excuse for a legal school absence and is due no more than 2 weeks after the missed performance. STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO USE THIS ALTERNATE ASSIGNMENT ONLY ONCE PER YEAR! EACH SUBSEQUENT MISSED PERFORMANCE (REGARDLESS OF THE ABSENCE BEING EXCUSED OR UNEXCUSED) WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF ZERO FOR THAT PERFORMANCE!**

Personal Electronic Device (PED) Policy

The students and director acknowledge the important role technology plays in education. Personal Electronic Devices, however, represent a major barrier in the teaching-learning process, as well as the instrumental and ensemble experience. In conjunction with the students, the following PED policy has been established:

- First Occurrence – General Reminder to the Class
- Second Occurrence – Individual Warning to the Student
- Third Occurrence – PED Placed in Quarantine Basket AND Zero for Weekly Participation Grade
- Fourth Occurrence – Parent Contact/Discipline Referral

Any dispute regarding the PED Policy automatically results in a zero for the weekly participation grade and discipline referral.

Homework/Practice

Students are expected to practice their assigned music as necessary in preparation for every rehearsal and lesson. Practice methods and specific assignments are discussed in class on a regular basis. If you are not clear what you are to practice or how to approach it, see the director. This responsibility has a critical impact on individual and ensemble success.

Performance Dress Expectations

Proper dress is a required part of the performance process. **Performances are a chance to showcase the collective product of an ensemble's preparation, NOT an opportunity to showcase individual, style, or preference.** All students are expected to be dressed appropriately. The director shall have the final say in the appropriateness of a student's attire and may deny the student's privilege to perform (resulting in a test grade of 0) if their attire is found to be inappropriate or contrary to the goals of the organization.

The dress expectations are very reasonable, able to be used beyond music activities, and affordable. If your student has any problems finding or purchasing a particular part of the dress requirements, please see the director for assistance. In some cases, there are performance dress components that former students (and others) have donated that are available to students in need on a first come, first served basis.

- **Symphonic Band/Jazz Ensemble**
 - Black Dress Shoes, Socks, Pants, Belts, Skirts, Dresses
 - Mexico H.S. Bands Polo Shirt (Provided)
 - SNEAKERS, SANDALS, FLIP FLOPS, AND JEANS ARE EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED, EVEN IF BLACK!
- **Marching Band Uniforms**

All Marching Band students are fitted into a uniform. Additional uniform needs include:

 - Black Marching Shoes
 - Long Black Socks
 - Shorts/T-shirts that fit under uniforms
 - Deodorant
 - Black Marching Gloves
 - SHOES AND GLOVES **MUST** BE OF THE MARCHING BAND VARIETY – BLACK ATHLETIC SHOES, DRESS SHOES, AND GLOVES NOT SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR MARCHING BAND WILL NOT BE ALLOWED – NO EXCEPTIONS!
- **Appropriate dress for smaller ensembles and any alterations to the above dress will be discussed in advance and in accordance the performance medium.**

Textbooks/Music/Equipment

Students/Parents/Guardians are responsible for purchasing personal materials for each student (oils, reeds, mouthpieces, sticks, etc.). These items will not be provided. Each student will be assigned a folder with ensemble music. Students are responsible for all music that is assigned to their folder. If the music is destroyed or missing, the student will be charged a replacement fee. If for any reason there is a financial, physical, or other problem with obtaining materials, please contact the director for assistance.

Instrumental Supplies

Supplies are available from many resources/stores. Some stores allow you to call, pay over the phone, and have item(s) delivered to the school. Mexico Academy and Central Schools does not endorse any one retail location. Students/parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the director for any recommendations of products, services, and resources. Always contact the director when purchasing an instrument. There are many poorly constructed products and brands available in the mass market. As music educators, we are trained to suggest appropriate brands and models for your circumstances. In many cases we may know great resources for new and used products. Invest wisely and let us be involved in any major purchases. We are also available to evaluate any "used" instruments you may have an opportunity to purchase or inherit. We are here for the best interests of the students and their future success in music. The tools (instruments and supplies) that each student uses can have a large impact on the success and enjoyment of the learning process.

Additionally, keep your instrument clean and in good repair. If you are having trouble with your instrument, notify the band director outside of your lesson or rehearsal. Lessons and rehearsals cannot be stopped for individual repairs/needs.

- Instrumental Band Supplies Required for Class
 - Woodwinds
 - Appropriate Mouthpiece/Ligature/Reeds (clarinets, saxophones only)
 - Cork Grease
 - Swab and Polishing Cloth
 - Pencil
 - Brass
 - Appropriate Mouthpiece
 - Valve Oil
 - Slide Grease
 - Cleaning Kit and Polishing Cloth
 - Pencil
 - Percussion
 - 1 Pair Vic Firth American Custom SD1 General sticks
 - Pencil

Band Lockers

All instrumental students are assigned a cubby in the band room where they may store, during the day, their instruments, music, and other personal items. Instrument cases and personal belongings are to be left in cubbies during rehearsals and not on the floor or in the seating area of the band.

Instruments are not to be left in the band room overnight or over weekends and holidays. Lockers may be checked occasionally at the end of the day and participation grades may be affected if you have left your instrument and/or music (you cannot practice without your instrument or materials). It is your responsibility to make arrangements to get your instrument to/from home for practice. The school/director is not responsible for missing items that are left in the band room/lockers.

Music Rooms

It is everyone's responsibility to keep the music rooms neat and organized. If something is out of place or not put away, make it your responsibility to ensure that gets taken care of. Students are asked not to be in the director's office/area without permission. **For safety and security reasons, students not currently enrolled in a music course are not allowed in music rooms at any time! Please do not touch instruments and equipment that do not pertain to you.**

Appropriate Behavior

Music students are continuously held to high behavioral expectations. **Disrespect of peers, director, personal property, or district owned equipment and facilities will not be tolerated!** All District Policies and the Student Code of Conduct will prevail. **Remember: No matter where you are, you are always a representative and ambassador of our music program!**

Required Authorizations/Forms

- **FamilyID**
 - **Authorization for Treatment** – This certifies that as a parent or legal guardian of the named student, you give the Mexico Central School District permission to care for your child at school in accordance with the District’s established medical and first aid guidelines. You also grant the school nurse permission to exchange medical information about your child with their physician and current teachers as necessary.
 - **Mexico High School Bands Handbook Agreement** – This certifies that students/parents/legal guardians have accessed, read, understand, and agree to all information in the Mexico High School Bands Handbook.
 - **Media Statement** – The Mexico High School band program uses many different methods of communicating information with students, parents/guardians, and the greater school community. Among those methods are District websites, CHARMS, and social media. During the course of the year, your child’s name, work, and/or likeness may be selected to highlight their accomplishments on one or more of these platforms. This certifies that as a parent or legal guardian of the named student, you have read and understand the above statement, but reserve the right to “opt-out” if you choose. The Opt-Out procedure is available in the Mexico Academy & Central School District High School Code of Conduct and Student Handbook.

Other Forms

- **Music Inventory Contract (Students with school-owned instruments, only)** - This certifies that students/parents/guardians have accessed, read, understand, and agree to the guidelines, requirements, and responsibilities outlined in the Mexico Academy and Central School Music Inventory Contract for the instrument(s) and/or equipment assigned to them.
- **OPTIONAL Mexico High School Honors Symphonic Band Application** - This certifies that students have accessed, read, understand, and agree to the additional requirements outlined in the Honors Symphonic Band Application.

Family ID Link for Required Authorizations/Forms



Family ID Link for New Users/Tutorial/Help



The Handbook, forms, and links are also accessible at www.mexicohsbands.weebly.com

