

Morris Middle School

Stallion Band



2025 - 2026

Handbook

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Welcome to the Morris Band Program!

The Morris MS Band program has a history of continued excellence. We are glad you have decided to become a part of the Morris MS Band family.

Being a part of the band is beneficial to your child in many ways. On a daily basis, band students are engaged in a highly creative performing art that stimulates growth in areas of the brain that no other subject can. This growth can be transferred into your child's academic endeavors. Band students also develop skills such as teamwork, responsibility, time management, dedication, self-discipline, social skills, leadership, confidence, and dependability.

The purpose of this handbook is to make you aware of the procedures and guidelines for the expectations of the Morris MS Band and to make your involvement in the Morris MS Band successful.

Upon completion, please sign and return the information page at the end of this handbook. It should be signed and returned to school, indicating your understanding of the Morris MS Band guidelines and expectations.

Please sign the google form and acknowledge you read the handbook and turn in by Friday, August 22, 2025

Thank you! Welcome to the Morris MS Stallion Band!

Information for Morris Band Parents

FORMS CHECKLIST– Google Form for the Band Handbook Acknowledgement due by August 22, 2025.

Forms sent home first week of school that must be signed and returned:

_____ Instrument Maintenance agreement (\$50 due by Friday, September 5, 2025)

(Only for students using a school owned instrument from Morris.)

_____ Handbook receipt form in a Google Form at the end of the handbook

Forms sent home first week of school for parents to keep:

- Morris Band Calendar
- Morris Band Sectional Schedule (may be modified)
- Morris Band Handbook
- Morris Band FAQ

REQUIRED MATERIALS (MUST HAVE EVERYDAY)

***Students will receive a participation grade for maintaining materials and supplies on a daily basis.**

Materials*

_____ Instrument

_____ Instrument Cleaning Supplies

_____ Mouthpiece

_____ Flip Folder and Lyre (7th and 8th grade only)

_____ Combination lock for band locker (optional)

_____ Reeds (saxophones, clarinets, oboes, and bassoons only)

Supplies*

_____ Pencils

_____ Reeds, oil, slide cream, etc.

(Beginners Clarinets, Saxophones: Rico size 3)

(Concert Band, Symphonic and Honor Band: Vandoren size 3 or medium)

(Oboes and Bassoons Jones or Singing Dog Medium Soft Reeds)

_____ Reed Fees: We will provide reeds for clarinets, saxophones, low reeds, and double reeds for a minimal fee. \$30 each semester for clarinet, sax, and low reeds, and oboes and bassoons \$50 per semester.

BAND PERFORMANCES:

-Public performances, (ie football games, pep rallies, and concerts, (Fall, Winter and Spring), are mandatory. Performances are part of the McAllen ISD Band Curriculum and TEKS.

A performance will be counted as a test grade.

-If an unfortunate situation occurs (ie, a sudden and severe illness, accidents, death in the family, or unexpected, unplanned events), the absence will be excused. If possible, please notify the band directors as soon as possible.

-Since performances cannot be made-up, a student is responsible for passing off the concert pieces and is required to play off their concert pieces to a director for a minimum grade of a 70, unless the absence falls within the excused guidelines.

-A band audition (All-City, Region, or UIL), or concert performance takes precedence over an athletic practice, conversely, an athletic game takes precedence over a band practice. Football players and cheerleaders playing or performing during a Morris MS Band football game are excused from playing with the band, but if you are not playing the night of the band's performance, you are expected to perform with the band. Please discuss your athletic calendar with your band director during the season you are playing.

REHEARSALS

Beginners: Daily rehearsal during band class and 3 to 4 after-school rehearsals the week before each band concert (see calendar for specific dates)

Concert Band: Daily rehearsals during band class, sectionals after school with the Symphonic Band are encouraged for additional help, but not mandatory

Symphonic Band: Daily rehearsals during band class, class lessons, and sectionals before or after school

-If there is a conflict with after school athletics, Symphonic band students may attend the morning sectionals.

-Sectionals, after-school group lessons, once a week, are mandatory for a participation grade and in preparation for auditions and concerts

Honors Band: Daily rehearsals and lessons during band class, and morning sectionals starting the second week of school.-Preparing to audition for the McAllen All City Band and the TMEA Region Band audition is highly encouraged for the Morris MS Honors Band.

-Sectionals, (group lessons), once a week, before-school are encouraged for a participation grade in preparation for auditions and concerts

DONATIONS

We welcome any donations of **cases of water bottles the week of the event** to be used at our outdoor performances with the 7th and 8th grade students. You are welcome to donate **when we notify the students**, either at the front office or at the band hall. Storage is not available for early donations. If anyone is interested in making a monetary donation to our program, we have a sponsor request letter available, as well as various incentives for our sponsors. Please contact us for more information.

VOLUNTEERING

We love parent volunteers! We will post major volunteer opportunities on charms and we will send a note home before any events requiring volunteers.

Some of our volunteering opportunities include:

- Chaperoning for our one football game performances with the 7th and 8th grade students and one with the McHi Band.
- Chaperone any field trip your child is involved in.
- Riding the bus to and from Band events.
- Must fill out proper forms for chaperoning.
- Driving the equipment truck (PENSKE) for our competitions.
- Help with the 5th Grade Recruiting Band Drive

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

THRILLSHARE We will be using aptegy for cell phone communication.

SCHEDULING WITH OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES Students can be in band and join other school activities and organizations such as; athletics, UIL, Choir, Orchestra, Cheerleading, etc. We will work with other teachers, directors and coaches to help our students succeed in all of their activities. Our priority is the student and we will do what is best for the student. With open communication between band directors, coaches, teachers, administration, and parents, we do not foresee any problems. If there is ever a scheduling conflict with other activities, please notify us. We will do everything we can to help, and if we see effort and care from the student, we will compromise. However, if a student misses a band event for a different activity without making an effort to communicate with the band directors, there will be appropriate consequences.

BAND UNIFORM-Band shirts, one dry-fit polo shirt, and one dry-fit band shirt are necessary for performances and field trips. The two shirts will be available for purchase for **\$35.00**. This is not a fundraiser. If there are hardship problems, please speak to the band directors. We will notify you once we begin the order.

-6th grade Band students will wear the polo shirt for concert performances. The band dry fit shirt will be worn for any band events and may also be worn anytime throughout the year.

-7th and 8th grade students will wear the polo shirt for concerts and competitions and the band dry fit shirt with blue jeans for football games and pep rallies. The shirt may also be worn anytime throughout the year.

The “Band Uniform” consists of: Band Polo shirt, Black pants, black shoes, black socks, and black belt (can be purchased anywhere). This uniform will be used for concerts and school performances and Evaluations. **Failure to wear the required uniform for required events will result in a non-participation grade of zero.**

CONCERT UNIFORM- The 7th and 8th Grade Concert, Symphonic, and Honors Band will be using a concert uniform for UIL events. The girls will be wearing a one piece pant suit and the boys will be wearing a tuxedo shirt, vest, dress pants, and a blue tie. The garments are machine washable, but they must be steamed, not ironed. Only the shirt may be ironed.

CODE OF CONDUCT- The code of conduct of the Morris Middle School Band is the same as that listed in the McAllen ISD Student Handbook. All students are expected to abide by these rules whether on campus or at any location where they are representing our band, our school, and our community. Absolutely no consuming of alcohol, tobacco, vaping or drugs will be tolerated at any band function whether it is practice, performance, or en route. Public display of affection will not be allowed during any trips or performances.

The same is true of profanity, abusive behavior or any conduct unbecoming to a lady or gentleman. Our band philosophy is based on pride, responsibility and initiative. Those who cannot abide by the school and band rules do not have a place in the Morris Middle School Band Program.

Morris MS Band follows the level of discipline set by the Morris MS administration. Should an infraction occur by a student or between students, during band class, during a band event, or before, during, or after school practice, the band directors or any adult present will follow the following procedures:

- Conference with the student, if it is a low infraction, such as talking in class, using the cell phone during class, or not bringing materials to class.
- If the disciplinary infraction continues, conference with the student, parent contact, and a school DDF. A second occurrence with the confiscation of a cell phone, it will be turned into the office.
- Constant interruption of class, Referral, and contact with parents.
- Consistent infractions during band class that causes interruption of class will result in an immediate referral and possible removal of the band program, with the permission of the Morris MS Administration.

Band students with referrals or have been withdrawn from Morris MS to go to an alternative campus, will not be able to participate in the end of year field trip.

ABSENCES:

In order to have and maintain a high-quality band program, each member's attendance is essential. While the MMS band follows all school and district policies and procedures, the following additional guidelines outline the attendance procedures and policies for the MMS band. These attendance guidelines also apply to activities held outside of the school day.

Excused Absence Absences during the school day will be excused according to district guidelines. Absences from activities held outside the school day will be excused at the discretion of the directors. Appointments, tutorials etc. are not excuses for absence. Absences due to personal illness requiring medical attention, death in the family, or other extenuating circumstances (approved by director) may be considered for excused status. Students who are continually ill may be required to provide a doctor's note releasing them from participation. Absences should be discussed with a director to determine whether or not they will be excused.

Unexcused Absence Students with an unexcused absence from any required band activity will receive a zero in the grade book. Rehearsals, concerts, contests, and competitions cannot be made up. Students with an unexcused absence to a sectional rehearsal may be required to schedule a make-up time with their band director within one week.

Concerts/Performances Concerts and performances are an integral component of the band curriculum. Students should consult their schedules for dates and times. Each of the concert ensembles will perform

at various times throughout the school year and are mandatory. Periodically, the schedule may change, and updates will be communicated. Concerts are considered to have three parts: warm-up, performance, and listening. For the student, the concert begins at the warm-up. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes after the last group has performed and directors give permission for students to be dismissed. A general report time will be given for all students. If a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible to make up for all missed work. Mrs. Kingston will make exceptions for special circumstances.

Sectional Attendance:

Students are expected to be punctual and prepared. Absence from section rehearsals must be in accordance with the attendance policy. Students must make every effort to attend. Section rehearsals are an extension of the classroom and are graded accordingly.

Section rehearsal schedules may be found on google classroom or morrisms.band or by contacting the student's director. It is imperative that each sectional begin on time with everyone in attendance. Students who miss a sectional will not receive credit for participation. Please be aware of your child's sectional day/time and make every effort to assure that he/she is on time and ready to learn! Please do not schedule a dentist, doctor, or any other appointments during your child's sectional because it will cause him/her to fall behind the rest of the group.

An excused absence can be made up by individual practice for one hour (in addition to weekly practice requirements) or attending a similar instrument sectional (with director approval). Students who miss a sectional (excused or unexcused) have one week after they return to school to make up the missed sectional.

After a week, the absence will be considered unexcused and a grade of zero will be recorded. Unexcused absences will result in student and parent notification.

Beginner Band students do not have sectionals afterschool.

GRADE POLICY:

Students receive a class participation grade based on active participation in class and by having all required class materials. Since Band is a performance-oriented class for Fine Arts credits, every performance is a major grade. Each student is given a grade based on the preparation for the weekly lessons and sectionals they receive from their individual teacher. Written and playing tests will also be given a regular interval during the school year.

60% Participation/Performances -Weekly Sectionals

(Honors and Symphonic Band, Concert band will receive extra credit) -Playing Tests assigned on CHARMS

40%-Music Pass Offs/Music Projects-Assigned worksheet with Six Weeks Objectives

=100% Final Grade

ELIGIBILITY:

All MMS Bands adhere to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and MISD. Some band activities are designated as extra-curricular. Students participating in these activities are governed by eligibility requirements.

A student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the six-week period following a grade reporting period in which the student received a grade lower than seventy in any class. Loss of eligibility does not take effect until seven days after the end of the reporting period. Ineligible students are not suspended from practice or rehearsal for

extra-curricular activities. The student is not suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for the summer or any other vacation time.

Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student has been suspended as a result of failing, he/she may regain eligibility by passing ALL courses by the third week of the following grading period. Reinstatement of eligibility would occur seven days after the three-week progress report period (see TEA/UIL Side by Side). Weekly Practice Sheets Eligibility 13 The eligibility law does not affect activities that are considered curricular components of any course. Examples of these activities are all rehearsals and performances that take place as a regular extension of classroom instruction. Any performance that is competitive in nature or for which admission is charged is deemed extra-curricular. In addition to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and MISD above, students are required to pass the 5th six-weeks and must not receive an in-school suspension placement during the spring semester in order to attend the spring trip.

TRAVELING:

The band will frequently travel on either school buses or commercial buses. Students are expected to conduct themselves at the highest level on any trip. Students who have been subject to school-level discipline in the course of the school year may be deemed ineligible to participate in non-UIL field trips, at the discretion of the director and/or campus administration. Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with his/her parents must notify a director in writing with parent signature, prior to the event. Permission will be granted or denied based on the circumstances of the occasion. Students must have all necessary forms (MISD Medical/Travel Release) completed and on file with the band office to travel on any trip with the band.

For the safety of all involved, while on the bus students will:

- Remain seated at all times.
- Sit properly in a forward position.
- Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris.
- Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- Use only approved type/headset radios (no audible speakers).
- Remain silent when addressed by an adult on the bus.
- Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, singing, screaming, whistling, inappropriate jokes, etc.
- No public displays of affection.

Special Note: As a member of the band, you are a representative of your school. Always be on your best behavior. If you are in doubt about an action, do not do it! Your conduct at all times should be considered a good reflection on the school, the band, your home, yourself, and the community.

Chaperones: Adult chaperones must be MISD Approved Volunteers and are a great asset to the band program. Students will treat them as an extension of the band staff. Proper respect will be shown to all adults at all times.

Parent Drop Off/Pick Up: Parents must make arrangements for transportation of their children to and from section rehearsals, and to and from the band hall during trips and special events. Lack of transportation will not be an accepted excuse for missing a band function. To ensure the safety of their children, parents are encouraged to have a plan for drop-off and pick-up of students in a timely manner for all band events. For the safety of all involved, students must go home after the band hall closes. Parents, please be aware that the main office will be closed before sectionals end. Family transportation and car pools are ways to help your child get home safely and in a timely manner.



Morris Band Details

Band Hall Hours: Open 7:00 am to 5:30 pm.

Sectionals in the morning are from 7:00 am to 7:40 am Monday-Friday for Honors Band and Symphonic Band Athletes, 4:10 to 4:50 pm afterschool, Monday-Thursday for Symphonic Band. Jazz Band rehearsals will be held after school on Wednesday and Friday.

Ensembles:

Honor Band (Varsity Band) conducted by Mrs. Kingston

Symphonic Band (Non-Varsity Band) conducted by Mr. Bernal

Concert Band (Sub-Non-Varsity Band) conducted by Mrs. Kingston and Mr. Bernal

Beginner Band (6th graders) conducted by Mrs. Kingston and Mr. Bernal

Jazz Band (7th and 8th Grade) conducted by Mrs. Kingston and Mr. Bernal

Practicing:

On a daily basis, the Morris MS Band Hall is open by 7:00 am. Honors and Symphonic band students have sectionals in the morning or afternoon.

All Band Students are required to practice on their own for at least 30 minutes a day. Students that play large instruments and percussionists may practice in the morning or afterschool, so they do not have to take their instrument home every day. When possible, the large instruments may take the instrument home on the weekends and holidays.

7th & 8th Grade Band students trying out for Region Band or Region Jazz, may use the Morris MS Fine Arts practice rooms to practice. They must follow the Practice Room rules posted in the building. The following items are not allowed in the practice rooms: food, drinks, backpacks, or students not in any Fine Arts organization. Beginner Band students will be given permission to practice in the Fine Arts practice rooms after they have been properly trained by the Morris MS Band Directors.

Main group competition (for 7th and 8th grade students only)

U. I. L. Concert and Sight Reading Evaluation in March: students will perform 3 prepared pieces, and one piece that they have never seen before

Main individual competitions (for 7th and 8th grade students only)

Pre-Region Tryouts: The band students in McAllen ISD are selected through the tryout

Region Band Tryouts: best students in the region selected through the tryout

Solo and Ensemble Contest: student performs to try to obtain a Division ONE

Band Trip: The Symphonic and Concert Band will be going on a Halloween Tour in October. The Honors Band and select students from the other bands, will travel to the Elementary Feeder schools in December. All Bands will have an end of year celebration, to be determined later.

Fundraisers: We depend on money from our fundraisers to pay for equipment, travel costs, food costs, field trips and other expenses throughout the year. We need every student's help in fundraising so that we can continue to provide the highest quality program.

A small portion of the fundraising money that a student makes as profit on a fundraiser, will be set aside for any costs that that student might have, including the field trips. The majority of the profits will be directly credited to the student. You may fundraise the entire cost of the end of year field trip or you may pay for the trip in full or in payments. We do ask that everyone participate in the Band fundraisers.

A portion of the fundraiser profit (usually 10%) will go towards operating expenses for the band program. Operating expenses are defined as expenditures not covered by the MISD budget. Our list includes, but is not limited to: supplies, technology, sound equipment for the band department, instrument accessories, fees and/or deposits for competitions, meals for rewarding Band students, and field trips. Fundraising monies will belong to Morris MS Band, and cannot be refunded to a student. If a student raises money and is unable to attend a trip for any reason, the money the student raised becomes property of the MMS Band activity account. As per MMS Band policy, the funds are good only Due Process Financial Obligations Fundraising for the academic year and are not transferable for students from year to year.

PARENT COMMUNICATION:

Write a note: You may send a note with your child. You may also email or text Mrs. Kingston or Mr. Bernal. Please include a phone number and/or e-mail address that you can be reached and the best time to reach you. You may also send a message through the Remind App.

Conference Periods: The directors' main conference period is from **11:20 am to 11:50 am**. Please understand that our communication to you – the parents – is a very high priority for us. We want to take care of concerns and make every situation the best for each student.

Please contact us for clarification on any concerns before they become major issues. Due to sectionals and student help sessions, it is difficult to reach us before or after school. If we are working with students, please understand that they are our highest priority and deserve our complete attention



Morris M. S. Band F. A. Q.

By when do we need our instruments?

Beginners will need their instruments by the second week of school.

7th and 8th grade students need their instruments by the second day of school 8/15/25

Can we buy reeds at school?

Yes you may purchase your reeds. You may pay the Reed fee and get a set number of reeds all semester.

What are some music stores available to us?

Local music stores: Melhart's Music Center, Guitar Center, and Texas Band and Orchestra

Online music stores: Amazon, Woodwind Brasswind, Guitar Center

What if my child doesn't have an instrument selected yet?

Any 6th graders who have not selected an instrument yet will be placed on an instrument during the first week of school.

Can my child practice in the band hall before or after school?

Absolutely! The band hall is open every morning at 7:00AM. The band hall is open until 5:30PM every day.

Students may practice in the band hall or in the practice rooms in the music building. Any student caught not practicing, keeping the practice room doors locked, eating food in the practice room, or keeping the lights off in the practice room, will get a referral. Backpacks will not be allowed in the practice rooms. In the morning and after school, the band directors will be working with the section of the day; therefore, they are unable to supervise the students that are independently practicing, so we need them to be at their best behavior and respect all the Morris MS Band Hall Rules.

Because we share the music practice rooms with the choir and orchestra programs, students must sign in and sign out at the band hall to practice so that we know when our students have been in the rooms. When practicing before or after school in the Fine Arts building, band students **do not** have permission to walk off campus to buy food or drinks. Failure to follow the rules will result in the following consequences:

1. Parent phone call and conference.
2. Loss of privileges for staying before or after school practice.
3. Disciplinary action from the school.

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Student's Instrument _____

Please keep this Handbook for your records.



Morris M. S. Band 2025 - 2026

Student Information

First and Last Name _____ I. D. # _____ Grade _____

Class Period _____ Instrument _____ Locker # _____ Combination # _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Parent/Guardian's Cell # _____

Parent Email _____ Parent Cell # _____ Student Cell # _____

Preferred form of contact: ____ Call ____ Text ____ Email

Preferred language: _____

Please list any serious medical conditions you would like us to be aware of for your child.

I, the parent of, _____ (print student's name), have read and agree to the terms listed in the Morris Middle School Band Handbook Procedures and Guidelines for the year 2025-2026 posted on my child's Google Classroom.

Parent's Signature _____ Student's Signature _____

Date _____

Date _____