

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Gifford Middle School Band Program! This handbook has been written to familiarize you with the many aspects our program and to ensure an enjoyable and educationally rewarding musical experience. I realize you have a lot of reading material from school at the beginning of the year, but please take the time to READ ALL OF THE HANDBOOK! After you have read the handbook, sign and return the band agreement on the next to last page. From that point on, band students will be held accountable for the information contained in this handbook. Therefore, please keep this handbook for future reference.

Band is an elective and selective course. In the band class, we seek to develop and put to use the skill of playing a musical instrument. Through the process of developing that skill, students will learn math concepts that are applied to rhythm, music history, and a new system of notation. Students will also develop fine motor skills, their ability to hear more critically, and musicianship. The skill of playing a musical instrument in an ensemble requires the cooperation of a large team of musicians working together towards a common goal. It also requires practice at home, occasional after school rehearsals and performances, and an investment into a band instrument. Band also teaches responsibility to a group or team. The sound each student makes changes the sound of the entire ensemble. Therefore, the students' presence directly effects the success of all the students unlike any other class. Finally, each student possesses the musical and mental skills necessary to be good musicians. The success of each student is most likely if the student has a desire to learn to play, and the parents share responsibility for the music education of their child. I hope this handbook will lead you to a

successful and memorable experience in the band program, and I am looking forward to meeting all of the parents and students in the GMS band.

Sincerely,

Sean Srigley

Director of Bands

## ***Ensemble Descriptions***

### **Beginning Band**

Beginning Band is open to all 6th grade students who are recommended by their elementary music teacher. Previous musical training is helpful, however it is not necessary. The students start the year by learning how to read music and that knowledge is then applied to learning to play their instrument. The Beginning Band will perform throughout the year on the Fall, Winter, and Spring Concerts. There are minimal after school rehearsals in preparation for their concerts.

### **Concert Band**

Concert Band is open to 7th and 8th grade band students at an intermediate level of development based on auditions. The Concert Band performs on the Fall, Winter, and Spring Concerts. There are minimal after school rehearsals in preparation for their concerts.

### **Symphonic Band**

Symphonic Band is open to 7th and 8th grade band students at an advanced level of development based on auditions. The Symphonic Band performs on the Fall, Winter, and Spring Concerts, and at the Florida Bandmasters Association Music Performance Assessment. There are required after school rehearsals.

### **Jazz Band**

Jazz Band is open to advanced 8th grade band students based on auditions only. Also, students must be concurrently enrolled in the

Symphonic Band class to be eligible for participation in Jazz Band. The Jazz Band performs on the Fall, Winter, and Spring Concerts, the Florida Bandmasters Association Solo & Ensemble Festival, and various public concerts.

## ***What You Will Need for Band Class***

### **Beginning Band**

- Students will need to rent the instrument that he or she has selected with Mr. Srigley. Please make sure that it is an approved instrument and mouthpiece. A list can be found on page 3-4 of this handbook.
- In addition to the instrument, each student will need to buy his or her own copy of "Essential Elements Book 1" through a local music store.
- Each student will need a black, 1/2" binder, and 4 dividers

### **Concert Band**

- Students will need a working instrument.
- Each student will need a black, 1/2" binder, and 4 dividers

### **Symphonic Band**

- Students will need a working instrument.
- Each student will need a black, 1/2" binder, and 4 dividers

### **Instrument Rental Information**

The school owns and rents the following instruments: baritone saxophones, baritones, bass clarinets, bassoons, horns, oboes, and tubas. These instruments can be rented from the school at the cost of \$50.00 per year. This fee helps to offset, but does not cover the cost of maintaining our school instruments.

Any student responsible for instrument abuse will be responsible for restitution of that instrument.

### **Instruments, Mouthpieces, and Accessories**

It is important for each student to play on a good instrument so he or she can have the best chance at succeeding. A good instrument is one that can be played in tune without reasonable effort, and is capable of producing a good and characteristic tone quality. Instruments that are not capable of the above requirements will only cause the student to become frustrated and could limit the student's progress. Next, each student will need some type of mouthpiece that is also capable of producing sounds that are in tune and characteristic. The mouthpiece is where the sound begins, and therefore, is the most important component of any instrument. The following instruments and mouthpieces are recommended for their quality and value. CHECK WITH THE DIRECTOR BEFORE BUYING AN INSTRUMENT OR MOUTHPIECE THAT IS NOT ON THIS LIST!

### **Approved Instruments, Mouthpieces, and Reeds**

<b>Flutes</b>	Brand Buffet, Gemeinhardt, or Yamaha Mouthpiece: the better flutes have solid silver head joints
<b>Oboes</b>	Reeds: Jones or ask the band director for custom made reeds
<b>Bassoons</b>	Reeds: Jones or ask the band director for custom made reeds
<b>Clarinets</b>	Brand: Buffet E-1 1, Leblanc 7812, Selmer CL200, or Yamaha YCL 34 Mouthpiece: Vandoren B-45 with Rovner ligature Reeds: 7th and 8th Graders: Vandoren 3 or 3_ 6th Graders: Vandoren 2_
<b>Saxophones</b>	Brand: Keilworth, Selmer, or Yamaha YAS23 Mouthpiece: Selmer C-Star with Rovner ligature Reeds: 7th and 8th Graders: Vandoren 3 or 3_ 6th Graders: Vandoren 2_
<b>Trumpets</b>	Brand: Bach, Holton, or Yamaha Mouthpiece: Bach 5C
<b>French Horns</b>	Brand: Holton, Conn, or Yamaha Mouthpieces: Holton Farkas MDC or Girardinelli C8
<b>Trombones</b>	Brand: Conn, Bach, or Holton Mouthpieces: Bach 6 1/2 AL
<b>Baritones</b>	Mouthpieces: Bach 6 1/2 AL or Bach 5G

<b>Tuba</b>	Mouthpieces: Bach 18, 24AW, or Helleberg
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### **Instrument Accessories**

Music Stand: everyone should have a folding music stand for home practice

Metronome: highly recommended for keeping time during home practice!

Instrument Care Kit: Students need to have an Instrument Care Kit, which contains cleaning supplies specific to each instrument.

### **Percussion Equipment**

#### **Beginning Band Percussion**

Beginning students need a percussion kit with a practice pad and bells, Mike Balter green rubber mallets, 2B drum sticks, and a stick bag.

#### **Concert and Symphonic Band Percussion**

Students need a stick bag with 2B drum sticks, 1 pair of general tympani mallets, 1 pair of yarn mallets, and 1 pair of Mike Balter green rubber mallets.

### ***Band Uniforms***

#### **Beginning Band**

- Guys and girls will need black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks, and a solid white, long sleeve, button down dress shirt.

#### **Concert Band**

- Guys and girls will need black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks, and a white tuxedo shirt.
- Students will receive a black bow tie and cummerbund provided by the GMSBPA.

### **Symphonic Band**

- Guys and girls will need black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks, and a white tuxedo shirt.
- Students will receive a teal bow tie and cummerbund provided by the GMSBPA.
- GMS Band shirt, which can be purchased from the GMSBPA.

### **Jazz Band**

- Guys and girls will need black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks, and a white tuxedo shirt.
- Students will receive a teal bow tie and cummerbund provided by the GMSBPA.
- GMS Band shirt, which can be purchased from the GMSBPA.

### **Use of Band Facilities**

The use of band facilities before, during, and after school is a privilege. Students, therefore, should treat the band room and everything in the band room with respect. Those students who abuse the facilities and its contents will be disciplined accordingly.

### **Ensemble Room**

The Ensemble Room is not a lounge area. Students in the Ensemble Room must keep the room neat and orderly. Also, any director or adult that enters the Ensemble Room deserves the utmost respect.

### **Instrument Room**

This room is off limits to students except when getting out or returning an instrument to its proper place. Students' belongings such as books and clothes are not to be stored in the instrument room. The instrument is also not a place for social gatherings or conversations.

### **Band Office**

This area is private and should not be entered unless the director is present. Students must keep in mind that this office is a place of

business. Students are welcomed, but only with the band director present.

### **Telephone**

The telephone is strictly for band business or phone calls to parents with the director's permission.

### **Percussion Equipment**

ALL percussion equipment including the drum set is off limits to all students except for percussion students.

## ***Band Grading Procedures***

### **Middle School Grading Scale**

The county wide grading scale is as follows:

A=100—90

B=89—80

C=79—70

D=69—60

F =59andbelow

### **GMS Band Grading Policy**

Each student's grade is determined by the total points earned during the 9 week period. The following items are included in the students' grades:

10 points- Playing Quizzes and Practice Log Checks

100 points- 9 Weeks Practice Log

100 points- Class Participation

40 points each- Rehearsal Attendance

100 points each- Concert Attendance

### **Playing Quizzes**

Band students will usually have some type of weekly playing quiz that gives the director a chance to assess each student's progress on their instrument. These tests will be announced one week in advance and will generally include scales, exercises, or excerpts from class music.

### **Practice Cards**

Band students will receive a Practice Log at the beginning of each nine week period. The students are to record 120 minutes of practice each week. The student is to record the number of minutes practiced each day on to the practice log. The Practice Log must be signed by a parent or guardian, verifying the time the student practiced during the nine week period and returned on the specified date before the end of each nine week period.

### **A Few Words on Practicing**

In band class, the equivalent to homework is practice at home. Learning to play an instrument is just like learning any new skill in that it requires diligent practice. I encourage parents to work with their son or daughter and set up a practice routine at home. Ideally, students should practice 30 minutes every day.

### **Class Participation**

Band is a unique class in that each member's contribution effects the overall performance of the ensemble. For example, if a third trumpet is absent one day, the balance and intonation that is worked on will be different the next day when that trumpet player is present. Therefore, class participation is critical to the success of every student, not just that one student. Each student will start the 9 weeks with 100 points for Class Participation. During the 9 weeks, students can lose points for not participating or disrupting the learning process during class. Each day that a student loses his or her Class Participation credit for the day, they will have 5 points deducted from their 100 points. For example, if a student did not bring his instrument 2 days during the 9 weeks, they will receive 90 out of 100 points for Class Participation. Students can lose points from their Class Participation grade for the following reasons:

- Not prepared for class i.e. no instrument, no music, no mouthpiece, etc.
- Disruptive or off task behavior
- Tardy to class which includes not being ready for class to start 1 minute after the bell due to socializing and not preparing for class.

### **Rehearsal/Performance Attendance**

Band members are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. Due to the fact that band is a performance based class, rehearsals and concerts are an integral part of the curriculum and naturally part of the grading process. The concert is similar to a

semester exam in Math or English class in that we will work the entire semester towards that goal.

Each rehearsal will be worth 40 points, and each concert will be worth 100 points. Therefore, if a student is required to attend 2 rehearsals and perform in 1 concert during the 9 weeks, he would have an opportunity to earn 180 out of 180 points. If a student has an unexcused absence from a rehearsal, they would receive 0 out of 40 points for that rehearsal. If a student has an unexcused absence from a concert, the student would receive 0 out of 100 points for that concert. For example, if a student were to have an unexcused absence from 1 rehearsal, yet still attend the other rehearsal and the concert, the student would receive 140 out of 180 possible points.

### **Concert Participation Policy**

If a student has 2 unexcused absences from rehearsals in preparation for a concert, that student will be prohibited from participating in the concert. Due to the fact that the director will be prohibiting the student from attending the concert, the student will not have the 100 points for the concert computed in his or her grade. However, the student would receive 0 out of 80 points for missing both rehearsals with unexcused absences.

### **Rehearsal Absence Forms**

Band members must submit a Rehearsal Absence Form 1 week prior to a rehearsal in order to be excused. The form must have the student's and parent's signatures validating the reason for being absent from a rehearsal. The following is a list of acceptable excuses for being absent from a rehearsal:

- Family emergency.
- Student is too ill to come to school.
- School activity conflict that has been given every effort to resolve including Mr. Srigley's attention.

### **How to deal with activity conflicts?**

There are specific guidelines that all GMS activities adhere to when dealing with activity conflicts. It is important to remember that band is not considered an extra-curricular activity, rather it is a co-curricular activity, which means that band is a part of the student's academic schedule and may receive grades for scheduled performances not during the school day.

The following list of guidelines only apply to conflicts with other GMS related activities. The band schedule must take precedence over any activities that are not associated with Gifford Middle School. Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the reduction of the student's grade.

***Band Rehearsal at the same time as an Athletic Practice:***

Students are required to attend both activities for an equitable amount of time.

***Band Concert at the same time as an Athletic Practice:***

Students are required to attend the concert as it carries more weight than a practice.

***Band Rehearsal at the same time as an Athletic Game:***

Students are required to attend the athletic game as it carries more weight than the rehearsal.

***Band Concert at the same time as an Athletic Game:***

This conflict will be decided by the administration.

**Dismissal from Band**

There is a high level of expectation in the GMS Band program regarding performance and behavior. Therefore, students who have two referrals from band class can be recommended for dismissal from the band program. When a student receives his or her second referral in band class, the director has authority to schedule a meeting with guidance and the administration to determine if the student will continue in the band program.

***Secrets to Success in Band***

Students and parents must set a routine for completing Practice Cards. Practicing is how the band improves and is our major homework assignment.

Students should practice at least 30 minutes every day. You will be amazed at what you can accomplish in 30 minutes every day.

STAY INFORMED!!! Students will receive band calendars in class and the calendar is posted on our website. Please plan in advance so that there are no problems when rehearsals or concerts arrive. All conflicts can be resolved if there is advance planning.

STAY INFORMED AGAIN!!! Students will receive information in class that they should bring home. Please check your son or daughter's back-pack for band information. Also, we will try to post information on email and our website.

Students need their instrument everyday in band class. If you are not sure if you need your instrument, BRING IT!!! At least you will be prepared.

Become involved with your student's band experience. These students are doing a great thing and it means a lot when their parents are there supporting them.

## ***Band Awards***

### **Band Award Policy**

Awards are earned on the basis of participation and outstanding performance. Awards are presented at the discretion of the director. In order to be eligible to receive an award, the following criteria must be met:

A student must have been actively participating in the band for the entire school year and must be a current member of the band in good standing at the time of the award presentation.

A student must have at least a "C" average in band and must not have a grade in band lower than "C" for any grading period.

Any student who has not cleared their band record by returning items checked out or who have not paid for lost or damaged items will have their awards held until the records are clear.

Students must attend the Band Awards Ceremony or have a written notice as to why they are not in attendance in order to receive their award.

### **Awards**

**GMS Band Participation Award:** Presented to all students who have met the previously listed criteria.

**Service Awards:** Presented at the discretion of the director to students who have gone above and beyond the normal contributions of a band student.

**Most Improved Award:** Presented to one 6th 7th and 8u1~ grade musician who has demonstrated exceptional improvement and dedicated effort on their instrument.

**Outstanding Musician Award:** Presented to one 6th, and 7th grade musician who has demonstrated exceptional musicianship.

**Woody Herman Jazz Award:** Presented to an 8th grade student who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and musicianship in the jazz program.

**Director's Award:** Presented to an 8th grade student who has demonstrated exceptional musicianship and outstanding musical leadership.

### **Activity Awards**

**Artist's:** Presented to qualified band students who have earned 8 activity points during the school year.

**Master's:** Presented to qualified band students who have earned 18 activity points during a two or three year period with the GMS Band.

**Virtuoso's:** Presented to qualified students who have earned 30 or more activity points during their three year career at GMS.

## ***GMS Band Boosters***

The parents of the Gifford Middle School Band members have organized the Gifford Middle School Band Boosters. The success of the Boosters is due, in part, to the active participation of both the parent and the student. Some objectives of the Band Parents Association are:

- To stimulate and maintain an enthusiastic interest in all phases of the band program.
- To cooperate with the band director to see that the band's goals are met efficiently.

- To develop a closer relationship between parents, students, and the director and to stimulate the knowledge, performance, and appreciation of good music.
- To assist in fundraising to help finance certain extras not regularly provided for in the school budget.
- To aid in chaperoning band trips and activities, and help pass out uniforms.
- To augment or encourage educational trips that are sanctioned by the school.

Membership in the Gifford Middle School Band Boosters can be obtained through the payment of yearly dues.

### ***Band Members' Responsibility***

When a student decides to become part of the GMS Band, he or she must remember that there are responsibilities that come along with membership. The students now represent GMS and the community. For the band to be successful, every student must have regular attendance and must account for any absences. Every member must work to improve every single day. Students must also cooperate and work within a team that includes fellow students and the director. If everyone follows these guidelines, the students will enjoy a successful experience in the band program.

### ***Parents' Responsibility***

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to see that the policies outlined in this handbook are followed. Each parent is responsible for the attendance of their child at all band functions. Also, parents must see that their child practices regularly. In addition, parents must see that any instrument, rented or privately owned, is kept in good working condition. Finally, your children are involved in a positive activity that promotes confidence, responsibility, and self-esteem and they deserve your support. You can support your child by becoming involved in the band activities and attending the students' concerts. If the director, students, and parents work together, the students will have an experience that they will remember for years to come.

# Gifford Middle School Band

## 2007-08 Parent-Student Agreement

I have received and read the Gifford Middle School Band Handbook and understand the responsibilities of membership in the Gifford Middle School Band. In addition, I agree to communicate and follow all guidelines listed in the handbook regarding participation in the Gifford Middle School Band.

*Please Print*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2007-08 Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please Sign*

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_