

GFMS Band Handbook

2019-2020

Dear Band Parents and Students,

Welcome to a new school year and to the GFMS 2019-2020 Band.

This handbook is our effort to make clear the expectations for the band and its members. In it you will find policies regarding rehearsal and lesson attendance, home practice commitment and, of course, performances. I urge you to keep this handbook at home where it can be used to check performance dates, special events, and to clear up questions regarding policies.

Please note that while this handbook details our policies and expectations, it can't anticipate every situation that we may encounter during the course of the school year. When questions or special circumstances arise, please contact us.

In order to make sure all students and parents have read this handbook and understand all the information, please ***sign and return the contract agreement*** found on the last page. As always, thank you for your continued support. We are looking forward to a terrific year!

Musically,

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Rehearsals

Rehearsals take place during the school day and meet every other day. Similarly to any other class, the necessary materials are crucial to the students' success in their band class.

Students are required to bring the following materials to each rehearsal:

- Their instrument, including all the 'extra' supplies that might go with it. For example, if your instrument requires reeds, neck straps, drumsticks, cork grease, valve oil, etc. students are required to have these with them at each rehearsal along with their instruments.
- **A sharpened or mechanical pencil. NO PENS OF ANY KIND!**

The pencil should be kept in their band folder at all times for easy access.

- Their band folder (which will be given to students at the beginning of the school year) with current music, lesson logs, and their lesson book. These should be with them on their music stand at every rehearsal even if they share a stand with another student. Students are responsible for their own music.
- Binder for band, only with approximately 15 sheet protectors in it.
- Additional materials and lesson books can be found on the supplies lists located on the GFMS band website: https://gfms.carmelschools.org/groups/5249/nyssma/welcome_to_gfms_band

Lessons

All members of the band will participate in lessons. Students will be placed in small groups with the same or similar instruments. These lessons will last for an entire period, one day a week. The students' lesson schedule will rotate throughout the day. For example, if a student has a lesson week 1 period 1, in week 2 the student will have a lesson period 2, week 3 period 4, and week 4 period 8. The students leave their classes during those periods to come to lessons. The student is responsible for anything they miss during those classes. The schedule is set up so that students will not miss a class more than once every 4 or 5 weeks.

Lessons assignments will be available WEEKLY on our websites under

Lessons are a crucial part of the instrumental learning experience.

Students shall miss lessons for no reason other than a test.

Just like in the rehearsals, all the same materials are crucial to a student's success in lessons. If a student fails to bring these, it could result in a lower grade for that particular lesson. In addition to these materials, students will also be required to have a practice card that is signed by their parent or guardian at each lesson. (See Home Practice for more information.)

Grading

As with all of your student's classes, they will receive a grade for band. Grading for band will be slightly different than the other classes. Effort will be a huge part of your student's grade.

Students' grades will be available on Home Access and updated every other week.

Overall the grading will be as follows:

50% - Band: including but not limited to participation, attendance, attentiveness, being prepared including reeds, instrument, music, book, etc.

Accountability Items	Points off per weekly Participation Grade (weekly grade out of 100 points)
No instrument	-20 points per time (over course of week)
No music – MUSIC BINDER	-10 points per time (over course of week)
No reeds/sticks/mouthpiece where applicable	-15 points per time (over course of week)
No pencil	-10 points per time (over course of week)

20% - Lessons: attendance, preparedness including have lesson book, instrument, etc.

Lesson Preparation Grade	Points off per weekly Participation Grade (weekly grade out of 100 points)
No instrument	-50 points per lesson
No music – MUSIC BINDER	-10 points per lesson
No reeds/sticks/mouthpiece where applicable	-15 points per lesson
No pencil	-10 points per lesson

30% - **Practice Card Preparation:** having done and completed the written work in addition to the signed card.

Practice cards are due at lessons and will only be accepted one 6 day cycle late, for partial credit. Students will only receive full credit on practice cards if their performance for lessons reflects their minutes and work on their practice card.

Home Practice

All band members are expected to practice their instruments at home in preparation for lessons, rehearsals, and performances. Practice cards are to be handed in weekly, during the lesson.

Practice cards are available to print on both the GFMS Website

Home practice is to be documented on the practice cards, which their teacher will provide during their first lesson. These cards must be turned in at each lesson. They will be accepted **once a week ONLY**. **If students miss a week, cards can be turned in during band, or at the next lesson. Please note: no more than 2 practice cards will be accepted at a time.** A parent or guardian must sign the card at the end of their practice week. This will count toward their band grade (See band grading for more information.)

Band members in the 5th grade are required to practice a minimum of 60 minutes per week. This is about 20 minutes, 3 times a week. More practice above and beyond this is highly encouraged and will help the students greatly in their musical and instrumental success.

In music, ‘cramming’ for a test or a lesson will not result in a high success rate for your student. Every student will be using muscles in their hands and face that have not been used in this manner before. Without consistent practice, these muscles will not develop properly and the student will find it difficult to play and will not enjoy their instrument.

It is important to note that taking out their instrument, putting it together, swabbing it out, and putting it away does not count towards practice time. Students, however, will learn techniques in counting and practicing that may include singing or writing out counts or fingering on their instrument. These will count towards their practice time. Each student will learn how to practice correctly during lessons.

Additionally, the grade for a practice card will be based on the practice card AND the preparation. If students hand in a practice card but are not prepared for lessons they will not receive full credit on their Practice Card Preparation grade.

Percussionists Responsibilities

Percussionists are responsible for their own equipment at the beginning and at the end of the period. NO percussionist will be allowed to leave class until all percussion equipment is put away and the teacher checks it. Percussionists should take their percussion bin to the back of the room at the beginning of the period and return it to the percussion room at the end of the period. No mallets or equipment of any kind should be left in the back of the room. Students will be assigned days that they are responsible for the equipment.

School owned Instruments

Some students may be provided with a school – owned instrument depending on the instrument and it's availability in the school inventory. Our inventory is very limited and contains mostly large or unusual instruments. Some students should expect to be sharing instruments with students from other ensembles. (For example, a 5th grade student may play on the same tuba in their rehearsal as an 8th grade student.)

NO STUDENT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES IS ALLOWED TO TOUCH A SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENT WITHOUT PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTOR.

The teacher will assign school-owned instruments to the appropriate students. The teacher, student, and parent must then fill out a contract.

Classroom Rules and Expectations

- 1) Students will bring a pencil, folder, and their instrument to every rehearsal.
- 2) Students will come ready to learn with a positive attitude and open mind.
- 3) Students need to stay quiet when in their seats and refrain from talking or playing once rehearsal begins.
- 4) When the teacher steps on to the podium, students need to stop talking and playing and get ready to begin rehearsal.
- 5) Students **MUST** lock lockers after taking their instrument out of their locker at the beginning of the period and relock it at the end of the period when instruments are put away.
- 6) Students will be given 2 minutes at the beginning of the rehearsal to assemble instruments and warm up.

Required Performances

Performances will take place outside of the regular school day. These performances are a way for the students to show their parents, friends, and school faculty the pieces and aspects of music that they have been working on during the school year.

Students are required to attend the performances by their musical group and are highly encouraged to attend other performances by the other groups at GFMS, as well as by ones by the High School. All performances take place in the GFMS auditorium. All of the other concert dates and schedules can be found on the district calendar.

The concert dates are as follows:

CHS Pops Concert: Saturday, November 2nd (8th grade performs)

7th Grade Winter Concert: Wednesday, December 11th

8th Grade Winter Concert: Monday, December 16th

6th Grade Winter Concert: Monday, January 13th

Winter Concert Snow Date: Tuesday, January 14th

7th Grade Spring Concert: Thursday, June 4th

8th Grade Spring Concert: Tuesday, June 9th

6th Grade Spring Concert: Wednesday, June 17th

If a student misses more than 50% of lessons and practice cards leading up to a concert/NYSSMA Majors performance, they may not be allowed to participate in the performance, at the discretion of the teacher. Their attendance to the concert will still be required.

The concert dress code for all students is as follows:

White dress shirt, **black dress pants**, black dress shoes

GFMS 2019-2020 Contract

I have read the Band Handbook and agree to support the band by following the policies and guidelines set forth therein, including lesson attendance, performance participation, and home practice requirements. I will contribute my very best effort throughout the course of the school year.

Date: _____

Student Name: (please print)

Student Grade:

Student Band Cycle:

Odd or Even

Student Instrument:

Student Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature:
