

Gilbert Middle School Band Program

Dear Band Parents and Students,

We would like to welcome you all to the 2008-2009 Gilbert Middle School Band Program. This letter will serve as a handbook and operational guide for band students, parents and the directors. It explains the approach that will be taken toward the instruction and organization of the GMS Band.

Objectives of the Program

- To teach musical education through performance
- To refine and develop rehearsal/performance skills and techniques
- To provide performing opportunities in ensembles for students
- To provide for the musical needs of the school and community

Responsibility:

A successful band program requires preparation, hard work and commitment for each student. Classroom behavior, preparation and participation are critical to the success of our band.

The following classroom criteria have been explained to each student:

1. Display responsible classroom behavior
 - a. Be on time and prepared with all materials
 - b. Stay in your seat
 - c. Talk and/or play only when instructed to do so
 - d. Do not touch or play anyone else's instrument
 - e. Show respect and courtesy to others at all times
2. Practice regularly (minimum of 20-30 minutes daily)
3. Be prepared to contribute to successful rehearsals
4. Enjoy and take pride in your performances
5. Develop your listening skills for music in and out of the classroom

GMS Band Policy

1. **Attendance:** Band is a performance-based class. All students are required to perform in the band's scheduled concerts.
2. **Materials:** Students must have their instrument and all necessary equipment for the instrument to function properly (mouthpiece, reeds, etc.) with them in class each day. If the instrument is in the shop for repairs, a copy of the invoice must be provided to the director. Each student must have all music/method books and a pencil on their stand for each class. Students who do not have these materials will have their daily grade reduced. The method books we will be using are the Essential Elements 2000

(book 1 and 2). These will be available for purchase through the school, or they may be purchased at any music store.

3. **Assessment:** Grades will be based on four categories: Performances, Participation, Playing Tests, and Homework:
 - a. Performances (40%): Performance is the most important aspect of our class. Our performances for the year include (but are not limited to) Winter Concert, Spring Concert, School Assemblies, South Carolina Concert Festival (Concert Band), and possible Carowinds performance (Concert Band). Parents will receive written notice for all performances several weeks before hand.
 - b. Playing Tests (30%): Students will be tested on scales/rudiments, terms, music theory, or musical examples from method books and concert music.
 - c. Participation (20%): Students will receive weekly participation grades. Participation grades are reduced if a student cannot participate in class due to not having materials (instrument, music folder, pencil).
 - d. Homework (10%): Homework in band consists of students practicing their instruments. The band room will be checked daily for instruments being left at school. Instruments left at school indicate that the student is not practicing at home. 6th graders will be required to turn in weekly practice records that indicate how much they practiced each day the previous week. These records must be signed by a parent and turned in every Monday. Periodically we will have homework quizzes to check student's practice assignments. Turning in signed forms also counts as a homework grade.
Extra Credit: Extra credit will count as a 100 on a homework grade. Opportunities for extra credit will include turning in signed practice records (7th/8th graders), attending approved music concerts—such as orchestra concerts, chorus concerts, high school band concerts, etc. (turn in program and tell the class about what you saw), and participating in Region/All-State auditions/clinic and Solo & Ensemble Festival.
4. **Rules and Procedures**
 - a. *All GMS rules apply in the band room.*
 - b. **Be on time and prepared with all materials (instrument, music, pencil).** Students will have 3 minutes from the sound of the tardy bell to be in their seat and ready to play. Excessive tardies will result in disciplinary action.
 - c. **Stay in your seat.** If you need to get up for any reason ASK FIRST!
 - d. **Talk and/or play only when instructed to do so.** When the director is on the podium there is to be NO TALKING.
 - e. **Do not touch or play anyone else's instrument.** Students will be assigned a cubby in the band room to store their instrument during the day. This area is for instruments and folders only.
 - f. **No food or drink in the Band room.** This includes gum and candy.
 - g. **Show respect and courtesy for others at all times.** This includes students, directors and anyone else in the room.
5. **Consequences**
 - 1st offense-Verbal Warning
 - 2nd offense-Move student to another part of the room

3rd offense-Lunch detention/Conference with student after class/Parent Contact
4th offense-Referral/Parent contact

****If necessary, office referral could precede other consequence*

School Owned Instruments

GMS has a limited supply of instruments that students can use. Students who use a school owned instrument must pay an instrument rental fee each semester. This fee is used to cover instrument maintenance and any type of instrument repair that may be needed. Our instrument rental fee is \$20 per semester. Students may pay \$40 at the beginning of the year, or \$20 at the beginning of the year and \$20 at the beginning of the second semester. Fees must be paid, and an Instrument Usage Contract must be filled out before an instrument is checked out to a student. *Keep in mind that our instrument supply is very limited; most students will need to buy their own instrument, or rent one from a music store.*

SCBDA Band Events

The South Carolina Band Directors Association is an organization that functions as the Band Division of the South Carolina Music Educators Association. The purposes of this organization are to provide support for music education standards for band in South Carolina schools, and to establish and conduct activities that will serve to enhance and enrich the growth in music education of individual students and of band programs in South Carolina schools. It is the student's responsibility to sign up and pay the required fee for these activities prior to the required deadline that has been set by the SCBDA. Once a student has signed up for an event, he/she must follow through with their commitment by practicing for the event and participating on the assigned date and time as set by the SCBDA. Information about event will be given well in advance of the deadlines for registration. The following are SCBDA events that the Gilbert Bands participate in:

- **Region and All-State Bands:** SCBDA provides an opportunity for students to compete with other students throughout a region of the state for placement in the Region Two Band, and throughout the entire state for the All-State Bands. Students perform an audition that requires them to play 7 Major scales, play the chromatic scale, sight-read exercises, perform a required etude, and define musical terms. Students who meet these requirements and earn a seat in either Region or All-State Band will go to a designated school for a weekend clinic where they will work together with a designated clinician to perform a band concert. It is a very rewarding, educational, and enjoyable experience for students who participate.
- **State Concert Festival:** The GMS Concert Band will perform at the SCBDA State Concert Festival in the spring. Bands that participate receive constructive criticism that can result in improving future performances. Bands are assessed on their abilities to demonstrate good intonation, tone, balance and blend, good instrumental characteristics, and musicality. A rating is given to each band by each adjudicator. Ratings are: I – Superior, II – Excellent, III – Good, IV – Fair, V – Poor. Participation in this event is required of all 8th grade band students.

- **Solo & Ensemble:** This provides an opportunity for all students to perform a solo and/or participate with an ensemble before a qualified adjudicator for constructive criticism and a rating. Students are responsible for selecting music, choosing and rehearsing with their partner(s) or accompanist. (If a student decides to perform a solo, he/she must find an accompanist to perform with them.)

Bands at GMS

6th grade students are divided into two classes: a woodwinds class, and a brass/percussion class. The 7th grade is divided into a winds class (brass/woodwinds), and a percussion class. The 8th grade students meet all together in one full band class. At performances, the 7th and 8th grade students combine to make up the GMS Concert Band. The 6th graders perform separately in the 6th grade band.

Concert Attire

This year we will be ordering official Gilbert Middle School Band polo style shirts, as well as GMS Band T-Shirts. The polo shirts are for formal concerts—students should wear khaki pants and nice shoes with the polo shirts. The T-shirts will be more for informal school concerts, as well as for students to show off their pride in the GMS band. There will be an order form sent home in a few weeks that will have details about prices and sizes for the shirts.

Lexington One Performing Arts Center (LOPAC)

This year we are very excited to be able to perform our winter and spring concerts at the LOPAC, located at Lexington High School. This will be a much better venue for performing and attending band concerts. We will hold the GMS concerts in conjunction with the Gilbert High School concerts. More details will be given as we get closer to the concerts.

Calendar of Events

- November 3rd—registration deadline for Region/All-State auditions
- **December 8th—Winter Concert, 7:00 at LOPAC**
- January 10th—Region Band Auditions at Emerald HS in Greenwood, SC
- January 24th—All-State Band Auditions at Lexington HS
- February 27th-28th—Region Band Clinic at Lander University in Greenwood, SC
- March 13th-15th—All-State Band Clinic at Furman University in Greenville, SC
- March 16th—registration deadline for Solo & Ensemble Festival
- March 28th—Evening of Excitement fundraiser at GHS
- **Concert Festival for GMS Concert Band**—this is a one day event that will be held around the end of March or early April. The date and location of the event will be announced as soon as the information is given to us.
- **April 21st—Spring Concert, 7:00 at LOPAC**
- May 1nd or 2nd (TBA)—Solo & Ensemble Festival, location TBA
- May 7th—Band Awards Banquet at GHS (for all band students and parents)
- **May 23rd—Carowinds Music Festival for GMS Concert Band, all day event**

Contact Information for Local Music Stores

Gilbert Music Vault
892-9885

Musician Supply (Lexington)
957-3707

Pecknel Music (Columbia)
799-6860

Star Music (Columbia)
750-9990

We are very fortunate again this year to have two directors at Gilbert Middle School. Mr. Hodowanec and Mr. Tyner will be working together to help teach and assess the band students. Having a successful band program at GMS is our ultimate goal. The final products of our hard work are the concerts. Students are going to have a lot of fun and grow as musicians and people in the process. **Parents please help by encouraging home practice and supplying books and instrument accessory needs in a timely manner.** We assure you that you will feel as much of a sense of pride as your child does at the end of the each performance.

If you have any questions about these policies and procedures please don't hesitate to contact us at 821-1789, or email at styner@lexington1.net or mhodowanec@lexington1.net.

Sincerely,

Sid Tyner

Mark Hodowanec

Please sign and return this portion to the band director.

I understand and accept the policies and expectations of the GMS band program and will do my part to make the program successful.

Parent signature

Date

Student signature

Date