

# *Chelsea Middle School Band*

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Parents and Students:

Welcome to the Chelsea Middle School Band Program. I am looking forward to a successful year full of learning and excitement.

Please take a few moments to read the following Band Handbook. It will answer many questions you and your child may have in regards to grading, uniforms, performances, and ways that you can help make our band the absolute best. Please be sure to sign the back page and return all items as soon as possible. *You should keep the rest of this book as a resource for the year. The dates for every band event are located on the Calendar of Events page – please mark these dates on your calendar.*

Do not hesitate to call the band office or email me should you ever have any questions or concerns. I look forward to working with each of you.

Sincerely,

## Course Offerings

### Beginning Band

Membership in this band is open to all students. No previous musical experience is required. Playing a musical instrument, music reading skills, and group performance are emphasized in this course. This group will perform two major concerts, one each semester. There are also other performance opportunities throughout the year. Any student in this group is eligible and encouraged to attend the Alabama Bandmasters Solo and Ensemble Festival.

### Intermediate Band

This ensemble continues to stress the fundamentals of playing an instrument, accurate music reading, and group performance. This group is open to any 2<sup>nd</sup> year band student and performs at pep rallies, the annual Spirit Week game, and other concerts throughout the year. Students in this group are eligible to participate in overnight spring performance trips, (when trip is offered.) In order to participate in any event such as the State Band Performance Assessment or spring trip, students must meet attendance requirements for rehearsals and pass off their music to the director or director's designee.

***All students in intermediate and advanced bands are encouraged to participate in at least one of the following events:***

Alabama Bandmasters Association All-State Band Auditions—January

Audition information: <http://www.alabamamea.org/bandmasters/index.htm>

Shelby County Honor Band Auditions—January

Audition information: <http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/ACB/index.htm>

Alabama Bandmasters Association Solo and Ensemble Festival—May

### Advanced Band

This ensemble continues to stress the fundamentals of playing an instrument, accurate music reading, group performance. This group is open to any 3<sup>rd</sup> year band student and has the ***same performance opportunities and requirements as the Intermediate Band.***

## Supplies

### Beginning Band

- Essential Elements Book 1—WITH CD (All students)
- Trumpets, French Horns, Trombones, Baritones, and Tubas: valve / slide oil, polishing cloth
- Clarinets and Saxophones: reeds – #2 ½ strength, at least 3 playable reeds in class at all times. Reed guard is highly encouraged. (The reed guard allows the student to rotate the 3 reeds in the case. This promotes a longer reed life, therefore saves money.) Cloth to clean inside the instrument and mouthpiece.
- Flutes: cleaning rod and cloth
- Percussion: drum sticks (2B) and bell mallets, along with snare drum and bell kit. By late Oct., (2<sup>nd</sup> 9 weeks), students should purchase medium hard timpani mallets and yarn mallets. Stick bag is highly recommended.

### Intermediate Band

- Essential Elements Book 2 (All students)
- Brass and woodwinds should have a personal tuner, and percussion should have a personal metronome.
- Wire stand is encouraged.
- All brass: valve / slide oil, polishing cloth
- Clarinets and Saxophones: reeds - #3 strength, reed guard. 3 playable reeds in class at all times—promotes longer reed life.
- Flutes: cleaning rod and cloth
- Percussion: drum sticks (2B) along with own snare drum, bell mallets, medium hard timpani mallets, and yarn mallets. Stick bag is required.

### Advanced Band

- I Recommend method book and Essential Technique Book 3 (All students)
- Brass and woodwinds should have a personal tuner, and percussion should have a personal metronome.
- Wire stand is encouraged.
- All brass: valve / slide oil, polishing cloth
- Clarinets and Saxophones: reeds – #3 strength, reed guard. 3 playable reeds in class at all times—promotes longer reed life.
- Flutes: cleaning rod and cloth
- Percussion: drum sticks (2B) along with own snare drum, bell mallets, medium hard timpani mallets, and yarn mallets. Stick bag is required.

## Special Guidelines for Band Students

1. As soon as you enter the band room, take your instrument out of the case and leave the case in your locker. Find your seat (or get your chair and set it up) and have your music/book ready to begin.
2. When the director or any adult or student conductor steps on the podium, you should be silent so that the rehearsal may begin.
3. **Clarinet and Saxophone players must keep 3 playable reeds in your case at all times.** Each student should purchase a "reed guard" to protect reeds from breakage and promote longer reed usage. Rotating the playing reeds helps with this, too. Brass players must have valve oil and slide oil available each day. Percussionists must have stick bag with sticks and mallets in class each day.
4. It is imperative that all instrument cases have a clearly marked nametag at all times throughout the year.
5. Instruments, music, and accessories must be stored in appropriate lockers and not in the floor or any other place. The lockers are intended for band related items only. Students will have access to the band room every day from 7:10-3:15. Lockers will be shared by multiple students.

## Expenses

**The following is a list of expenses for band for the 2014-2015 school year. These were collected at school registration and beginning band instrument tryouts. If you were not able to attend either of these events, please complete the registration form and return with the fees as soon as possible, or by Sept. 5.**

- Students are responsible for providing their own **black pants, black socks and solid black shoes**. No sandals or open-toe shoes.
- Students should have all parts of the uniform prior to Nov. 1.

*Fees cover: Supplemental instructors, maintaining school equipment and instruments, purchasing new equipment and instruments, supplies, **copies, music**, supplemental materials, any medals earned at music performance assessment or solo and ensemble, software, ink cartridges, music stands, band director professional development, etc. The band receives no funding from any source. [Average cost of one song: \$50, +shipping, +any additional copies]*

### **Note:**

1. All band expenses should be paid as soon as possible, unless arrangements are made with the director. Please contact the director with ANY financial concerns. ChMS does not want to prohibit any deserving student from participating in this program.
2. Fees for field trips and/or performance trips are not included in these expenses.
3. Fees for honor bands/auditions are not included in expenses and vary for each event.

## Parental Involvement

- To cooperate with and support the director, principal, and school board to the end that the band department be brought to and kept at the highest possible degree of efficiency.
- To assist in the purchasing of instruments and other equipment (through fundraisers) not regularly provided for in the school budget.
- To aid in chaperoning band events and fundraisers.
- To promote and foster an enthusiastic interest in the total band program in the Chelsea community, sixth through twelfth grades.

**Your help and input is needed and greatly appreciated.** Please contact the director now if you can help in ANY way. Please consider taking an active part in our booster organization. We meet only a few times during the year at 7:00 p.m. in the band room or at Chelsea Coffeehouse. Check Mrs. Rizzo's blog and your e-mail for meeting dates.

### Immediate needs:

**\*\*Funds for school-owned instruments and equipment\*\***

We have more students than we have instruments!

Ideas for fundraisers and volunteers to organize them

Volunteers to help with writing receipts, collecting funds, copying, etc., throughout the year

Volunteer to coordinate school-owned instrument rentals/contracts, maintenance needs, etc.

Volunteers to help with concerts; includes, but not limited to communication, programs, publicity

Volunteer to coordinate chaperones for field trips and performances, as needed, 1 per grade level

Volunteer to help coordinate the annual school-wide talent show

## The Musical Partnership

Music education is a three-way partnership of teacher, student, and parents. The successful band student is almost invariably supported and encouraged by parents who take an active interest in their child's musical activities.

What can parents offer this partnership?

- **Patience** in reminding the student to do his or her daily practice.
- **Encouragement** when your child may become frustrated. Some things in music are learned easily, while others require intensive, repeated study.
- **Consistency** in offering your child the most favorable practice conditions.

## Favorable Practice Conditions

As your child advances in his or her music study, regular practice becomes more important. Regular and quality practice time can be promoted if parents assume the responsibility for providing the most favorable practice conditions. These include but are not limited to:

- **Regular time scheduled for practice – at least 100 minutes a week. 5 days, 20 minutes a day is an example of a good practice routine.**

- Praise for work well done.
- Regular maintenance and repairs done in order to keep the instrument in excellent condition.
- Never use practice as punishment.
- Sign the practice sheet and remind your child to turn it in on time—every two weeks.
- Encourage your child to practice for results, not just minutes.

### Private Lessons

Private lessons serve as an outstanding supplement to the daily instruction received in band. Lessons generally allow a student to progress more rapidly. They also help to maintain a student's interest after the "new" of the instrument has worn off. A number of professionals in the area offer quality private instruction for band students. The students are encouraged to study privately so that they may reap the benefits of their music education. Please contact the director for referrals.

### Field Trip Information

Participation in any band field trip will be at the director's discretion, subject to the following requirements:

- Satisfactory conduct in all classes.
- Exemplary attendance in all classes, band rehearsals, concerts, and events.

See Calendar of Events for field trip dates. Information and permission forms are sent home before each trip.

### Grading Policy

- Daily Participation—50%
- Playing Tests and Written Tests—25%
- Signed practice sheets—25% (homework)

Each student will begin each nine weeks with a **daily participation grade** of 100 points. Points will be deducted *daily* for failure to meet the following requirements:

- Bringing materials to class
 

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Instrument, sticks, mallets                        | 10 points     |
| Neck strap, reeds, book, mouthpiece, music, pencil | 5 points each |
- Performing with correct posture 10 points
- Cleaning up after class 10 points
- Returning instrument to correct storage area 10 points

### Practice Sheets

Practice sheets are due every two weeks, beginning Wed., Sept 3. Wednesday is the day set aside in class to accept practice sheets. If a student is absent on this day, it is due when he/she returns. Parent signature is required. Students should practice for results, not just minutes. Check your child's planner for weekly assignments and suggestions. Honesty, integrity, and punctuality,

and perseverance are some of the character traits demonstrated through completing this assignment correctly. (Character education, Shelby County Schools)

200 minutes—100 points

160 minutes—80 points

120 minutes—60 points

0 minutes or failure to turn in a signed sheet—0 points

Late policy—10 points deducted for each day. No practice sheets will be accepted after Friday of the “turn in” week.

### **Concert Participation Grading and Uniforms**

In order to present the band as a unified group, it is imperative that all band students wear the appropriate attire to all performances. This includes band shirts to school performances. In the event that a student forgets a uniform on concert day, every effort should be made to get the uniform to the school before the performance begins. Students who are not in uniform for a performance may have 30 points deducted from the 100-point performance grade or may be excluded from the performance. This will be at the director’s discretion. Use these guidelines unless otherwise notified:

Pep rallies—band shirt

School-day performances—band shirt

Spirit Week football game performance—band shirt

Evening concerts, ALL performance assessments, contests, festivals—ENITRE BAND UNIFORM

“Entire Uniform” means: royal blue band uniform shirt, solid black pants, solid black socks, solid black shoes. No open-toe shoes, no sandals, and no shoes with other colors on them.

If a student has a legitimate excuse for missing a scheduled performance or rehearsal, the director should be notified in advance. In case of an unforeseen emergency, the student is expected to bring a written excuse upon returning to school. If it can be considered a “school excuse”, then it will be treated the same by the director. Please refer to the Shelby County Code of Conduct regarding absences and excuses.

- 0 points        absence WITHOUT a written note of explanation
- 120 points     absence with an UNEXCUSED written note of explanation
- 160 points     EXCUSED absence with written note of explanation
- 200 points     attendance and participation in the entire program

### **Before School Rehearsals**

Band students will be required to attend before school rehearsals. As long as each student maintains good practice habits at home, only a few rehearsals will be needed before a performance. Beginning Band is divided into four classes, so we will need to assemble the full band before each concert. Intermediate Band and Advanced Band may combine for performances throughout the year. Since we do not meet together during the school day, some before school

rehearsals are necessary. Please refer to the Calendar of Events. Attendance is mandatory. The director should be notified in advance of any absences when possible. *Performance in a concert or other event will be determined by the student's ability to play the music as well as the number of rehearsals he or she attends.*

\*Parental contact, (note, phone call, e-mail, etc.), is greatly appreciated when a student misses a rehearsal for any reason. Everyone, including the director, is donating their personal time before or after school and making arrangements to attend. **Success is a team effort!**

### **Band Students Involved in Other School Activities**

Several students in band are also involved in many other facets of school. The director has the philosophy that students can be “shared” quite well if all teachers, coaches, and sponsors work together and plan ahead. Students at the middle school level are still trying to explore their areas of interest. Many of them will try different activities throughout their middle school career. Some will “specialize” earlier, and some will choose to “specialize” in high school. (The band director understands this as a parent.)

The Calendar of Events for the 2014-15 school year is included in this packet. Every attempt has been made to plan all performances and rehearsals. However, it is a work in progress and *changes are possible*. This calendar was submitted to the administration and school secretary May 24, 2014 for this current school year. Sponsors or coaches for school groups post on our master calendar, so we try to avoid scheduling major events at the same time. *The youth leagues and clubs do not coordinate directly with the school, so parents will have to work out possible conflicts with the appropriate coaches.* All school related activities can be worked out between the teachers, coaches, and sponsors. Parents should notify the band director, coach, sponsor, or other teachers involved of any potential conflicts.

**Performances are not compromised for any other activities. Provisions are made through the attendance grading and policy.**

### **Chair Auditions**

Students will audition for chair placement during the year. Students who have unexcused absences from these auditions will be assigned last chair until the audition can be made up. Only by having all members of a section present can the chair audition be fair to all involved. They will be announced in class at least one week in advance.

### **ChMS Band Discipline Policy**

#### **Rules:**

1. Come to class on time and prepared—always bring your instrument, music, and a pencil to band class.
2. Listen the first time and allow others to listen.
3. Respect others and their property. Never touch or play another person's instrument or belongings.

4. Speak, play your instrument, or leave your seat only with permission.
5. Walk carefully at all times in the band room.

**Consequences:**

1. If a student breaks any rule, a verbal warning will be issued.
2. On the second offense, the student will be isolated from the band and participation points will be deducted. If this becomes a pattern the parents will be contacted.
3. For any other offense, parents will be contacted.

\*If any offense is extreme in nature, the student will be sent directly to the office, and the parents will be contacted.

\*Note—due to large classes, physical environment of the classroom, (stairs and risers with sharp corners and edges), and the thousands of dollars of instruments in each class, the band discipline policy may be more strict than the school policy.

### **Communication**

Every effort will be made to communicate important information to the students and parents.

Methods of communication:

- Band Handbook—please read! It contains valuable information about the band and events!
- Student planners
- School e-news
- Band e-news

### **Student Leadership**

We have a student leadership teams for each band. These students have volunteered to be a support group for the band and the director. These students will lead by example, maintain a good attitude in all their classes, and strive to be superior musicians. Officers will be voted on by members of the leadership teams. More information will be sent home with team members.

Beginning Band leadership opportunities will begin soon.

### **Honor Band Explanation**

Honor bands provide students with exciting opportunities outside our school program. Students get to rehearse and perform with other middle school band students from all over the region, (in some cases all over the southeast U. S.). They also get to work with a highly qualified guest conductor for a couple of days. The events usually last 2-3 days and end with a concert for the public. Students get to experience the audition process, improve sight-reading skills, and be with other kids their age that are passionate about music and band.

Several universities sponsor honor band festivals. Band members are selected from those who apply. Interested students must have completed one full year of instruction and be in “good standing” in our band program. The director provides the students with an application to fill out. Most applications require a parent signature to ensure the student will participate if selected. The application deadlines are firm, and there are varying costs associated with each event.

The Alabama Bandmasters Association also sponsors two honor bands: All-State Band and District Honor Band. Interested students must pre-register and audition for the All-State Band in January. The top scores for each instrument are for the All-State Band, and those students, plus the next highest scores are chosen for the District Honor Band. (Alabama is divided into 8 districts in the state Bandmasters Association. Jefferson and Shelby Counties are District IV.)

### **Solo and Ensemble Explanation**

(Parents are responsible for transportation.)

This event is for students to improve their individual and/or small group performance skills. Students prepare an approved piece of music and perform it for a judge on this day. If the students receive high marks on their performance, then they will receive a superior rating and a medal to be worn on their band uniform at performances. Students may choose to play a solo or participate in a duet or other small ensemble. The music must be approved by the band director, and the student(s) is responsible for making sure that the judge has AN ORIGINAL COPY of the music performed. Students may play from a photocopy. Piano accompaniment is allowed for soloists, but not required.

**The registration fee of \$5 per event, (not per student), will be collected sometime in March. Late registration cannot be accepted.** Our district has set a firm deadline.

Art's Music, Bailey Bros., Gadsden Music and [www.jwpepper.com](http://www.jwpepper.com) have many appropriate books and collections available for minimal cost. Again, the director must approve the music for each event.

Preparations for this event can not be done in class, but Mrs. Rizzo can be available any day before school. Please schedule an appointment with her if you would like extra help.

The District Vice-Chairman will accept registrations from schools in our district, and then assign each school a block of time for the performance day. (See May calendar.) I will let you know this time as soon as I receive the information. (Sometime in April)

This is a wonderful performance opportunity for the students. There is no audience—just the judge. Everyone is encouraged to participate in this event. If the song isn't quite performance ready that day, then the judge may give a score of "excellent", "fair", or "poor". All students receive wonderful feedback from the very qualified judges. With practice and preparation, it is a positive learning experience for everyone involved.

### **Smartmusic**

Parents may purchase the software in subscription form for at home use. It is good for one year from the date of purchase—not just for the school calendar year. Students would have very limited access at school, but this is a valuable tool to have at home. Our high school band also uses this software. Please visit the website for more information: [www.smartmusic.com](http://www.smartmusic.com). This is a wonderful way to practice for students at every level.

**Please fill out this form and return to Mrs. Rizzo before Sept. 5.**

**We have read and understand the Chelsea Middle School Band Handbook and Calendar of Events 2014-15.**

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**Student Signature and Date**

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**Class Period**

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**Parent Signature and Date**

