

WAKULLA MIDDLE SCHOOL



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BAND HANDBOOK
2023-2024

Director
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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Wakulla Middle School Band program is to offer students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades an opportunity to learn about instrumental music in a positive, fun environment. It is our desire to give each and every student the experience of creating music and expressing creativity through music. We believe that every child has the right to develop a lifelong love of music. Our band program exists to help facilitate that development and to prepare them to meet the high school entrance level as stated through the Sunshine State Standards and the local high school.

EXPECTATIONS

Members of the WMS Band are expected to be enrolled in one or more of the available band classes. In addition to class participation, there are some after school events in which students will participate. Every member is valuable, and as such, every member is expected to be present and giving their best effort in class, at each event, and in their practice time at home. Students will learn all the musical concepts and instrumental techniques they need to in order to be successful on their instrument during class time but must solidify those techniques on their own time through individual practice outside of class. Parents/guardians are expected to ensure their student is practicing consistently.

Band events, including rehearsals, performances, concerts and some special functions will occur periodically throughout the year. The Director will give advance notice of each event such that each member is capable of attending and staying for the duration of the event. Communication between student, band director, and family is absolutely vital for success of the ensemble. The director primarily communicates through email and handouts sent home with students. Please ensure you have an up-to-date, active email that you check on file so that you don't miss any communication.

CLASSES / AVAILABLE ENSEMBLES

BEGINNING BAND (BAND I): This course is designed for students who have never played a specific Band instrument before. No previous experience on any instrument or with music reading is necessary. Students in this class will learn everything from the beginning—music reading, music writing, music history, playing an instrument, care of instruments, and making music together! Students will have at least three performances during the school year in the form of public concerts. 7th grade students who successfully completed beginning band can take beginning band as a second elective to learn and develop skills on a secondary instrument, alongside their concert band course where they focus on their primary instrument.

CONCERT BAND (BAND II): This course is for students who successfully completed Band I the previous year or played an audition for and received approval from the Director. This ensemble will build on concepts and lessons from Beginning Band. Students will have more performance opportunities, including at least three required concerts, pep band performances at home football games, and the opportunity to participate in Solo & Ensemble, All-State Bands and Orchestras, and All-District Honor Band. This ensemble will rehearse after school throughout the school year. Frequency and duration of these rehearsals will be communicated by the director at the beginning of the year.

SYMPHONIC BAND (BAND III): This course is for all students who have successfully completed Band I and Band II, or who have played an audition for and received approval from the Director. In this class, students will continue to build on concepts and lessons taught in the previous band class but will work on more difficult music in a more advanced setting. Students will have several performances, including at least three concerts, Music Performance Assessment (MPA), pep band performances at home football games, and the opportunity to participate in Solo & Ensemble, All-State Bands and Orchestras, and All-District Honor Band. This ensemble will rehearse after school throughout the school year. Frequency and duration of these rehearsals will be communicated by the director at the beginning of the year.

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE: This course is for 8th grade percussion students who have been in band previously as well as 8th grade non percussionists who wish to learn a secondary instrument and perform in an additional ensemble. This course will give specific instruction on percussion techniques and develop ensemble performance skills specific to percussion through rehearsal and performance of percussion ensemble repertoire.

JAZZ BAND: This is an ensemble that does not meet as a class during the day. Rather, we meet weekly for an after-school rehearsal. Students must be enrolled in symphonic band or concert band and receive approval from the director to participate in this ensemble.

CONFLICTS

It is the desire of the band program that students should be able to participate in a variety of school activities (like band, chorus, sports, drama, etc). When teachers, students, and families work together and communicate, the majority of potential conflicts can be addressed before there are any issues. However, the following guidelines should be considered in the event of conflicts:

- 1) a *concert/performance* or *game* should take precedence over rehearsals or practices
- 2) a conflict should be reported to the Band Director by the student AS SOON AS POSSIBLE in order that potential solutions can be evaluated
- 3) Wakulla Middle School events will always take precedence over non-school related activities.

Conflicts will be handled on an individual basis. **Advanced notice is required.** There is usually a solution available and with enough time, the director is willing to explore solutions in order that a student can still actively participate in as many activities that a parent/guardian is willing to permit.

DAILY PROCEDURES

All procedures will be discussed with students in class so that everyone is aware of them.

Each Day, students will:

1. Come into the room quietly and quickly, get their instruments, supplies, and stands,
2. Sit in their assigned seat and assemble their instrument. *
3. Students can *quietly* play/practice *their* instruments in their seat until the Director begins class activities. At that point, all noise will cease.
4. Classroom activities will be conducted by the director.
5. At the end of class, students will be given extra time to put up their instruments in an orderly manner and return to their seats. Students will remain in their seats once all materials are put away. The Director will dismiss each class once all necessary materials have been appropriately put away.

*The director will provide students a specific amount of time after the bell rings to complete steps 1 and 2. Any student who has not completed these steps in that amount of time may lose participation points at the discretion of the director.

CONDUCT

All students in the WMS band program are expected to follow the official Student Code of Conduct of Wakulla Middle School and the Wakulla County School Board at all times. The following conduct standards have been designed to create a positive learning environment. They are expected of all WMS band members at all times:

1. There will be no talking or disruptive noises while the director is conducting activities.
2. There will be no food, drink (except water), candy, or gum allowed in the band room, or any time instruments are being played.
3. Students may not touch instruments or equipment that does not belong to them without permission from the owner AND the band director. This is a zero-tolerance violation.
4. Theft will not be tolerated and is a zero-tolerance violation.
5. Students must stay in their area at all times. There are certain areas in the band room/at performance venues students are not allowed to be.
6. Show respect to anyone and everyone in any class/event setting. This includes but is not limited to directors, instructors, classmates, guests, etc. No student may say anything negative, insulting, or demeaning to others.
7. Students will strive to maintain positive words and attitudes while participating in band activities and classes. No use of profanity or otherwise inappropriate speech will be permitted.
8. Use pencil, only, in class and when marking music.
9. No spraying of perfumes, body sprays, hairspray allowed in or around the band room.
10. Participation and preparation: 30% (consists of musical preparation and bringing all required materials. Required materials include instrument [including mouthpieces and reeds], all assigned music, method book, and pencil.)

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

Non-adherence to these conduct standards could result in one or more of the following disciplinary actions.

1. Verbal Warning
2. Removal from an activity
3. Lunch Detention
4. Parent/Guardian contact
5. Referral (Often paired with ISS, but not always)
6. Ineligibility to participate in future band events or activities.
7. Removal from the ensemble

If a student's actions warrant certain disciplinary actions, the director holds the right to enact any of the above disciplinary actions at any point, at their discretion.

GRADING

Student's grades in band will be determined according to the following criteria:

- a. Participation and Preparation: 30% (consists of musical preparation and bringing all required materials. Required materials include instrument [including mouthpieces and reeds], all assigned music, method book, and pencil.)
- b. Assignments: 30%
(Includes practice assignments and written assignments assigned to be completed in class or as homework)
- c. Assessments: 40% (Assessments may be written or performed by a student on their instrument, depending on the content being assessed. If an assessment is missed, students must submit/complete the assessment as homework if possible.)

The grading scale is as follows:

A	100-90%
B	89-80%
C	79-70%
D	69-60%
F	59-0%

Band classes will be graded just as strictly and will require just as much focus and long-term attention to detail as any other class. Students and parents are expected to check focus regularly. Students have the opportunity to make up grades for most things by simply re-doing/completing an assignment/assessment within the nine week grading period.

EXTRA CREDIT

There are a few ways that students can earn extra credit:

On a Scale Test, the student may choose to learn an extra octave. This can earn them one extra point on a test grade (for example, an 11/10), and tests are 40% of their grade. Even though it's only one point, it can significantly increase their grade.

Attend a concert or performance! Any type of music at any place is acceptable! For example, you could attend your little sister's chorus concert at Medart Elementary, or a WHS Band concert, or listen to the guy who plays guitar at your grandma's nursing home, or an Imagine Dragons concert...basically, anything you can PROVE you were at. We highly recommend attending high school, collegiate, and professional band, and music performances. With our proximity to 2 major universities, a massive number of talented musicians perform in Tallahassee regularly and that is an opportunity that should not quickly be passed up! In order to get credit, students need to turn in a ticket or a copy of the concert program. If the director asks you some questions about it and you can't answer, you won't get credit—so don't lie, or it will be Awkward and lying is not a characteristic of a well-rounded person, band member, or Wildcat.

ELIGIBILITY & CONTRIBUTION

As part of any ensemble in the WMS Band Program, students will be expected to maintain qualifying grades in all of their band classes.

It is expected that all students involved in the band program will be “contributing members” of the ensemble. This is defined as “consistently contributing through instrumental performance and through personal investment in the band program.” Students who do not add to the experience of others both with their playing (e.g., playing their instrument each day in class) and their presence (i.e., students must not be rude or distracting so as to detract from another student’s experience) may be asked to change ensembles or possibly be dismissed from the program. A parent conference/meeting will be scheduled before any such action is taken, and every opportunity will be given for students to improve once an issue has been detected. Please understand that the actions (or inactivity) of one student have an effect on all of the others present in their band.

UNIFORMS

Performances and concerts, with the exception of a few, will often be conducted in a formal setting. As such, members of the ensemble will be expected to dress according to the appropriate uniform for their ensemble. Each ensembles uniform attire is as follows:

- a. Symphonic Band – **Black button up dress shirt** tucked into **black slacks/dress pants** with a **solid black belt, black dress shoes** worn with **black socks** (that cover the leg when seated).

These materials can be purchased at most any store that sells clothes.

- b. Concert Band – WMS **Band Polo** tucked into **black slacks/dress pants** with a **solid black belt, black dress shoes** worn with **black socks** (that cover the leg when seated).

The band polo will be ordered through the band at the beginning of the school year. All other materials can be purchased at most any store that sells clothes.

- c. Beginning Band – WMS band T-shirt and blue jeans.

The band T-shirt will be ordered through the band at the beginning of the school year.

- d. Jazz Band* – WMS Jazz band shirt, and blue jeans.

*If the jazz band is performing at the same concert/event as the student's primary ensemble, they should wear the uniform associated with their primary ensemble.

Students in all band classes/ensembles will also need to purchase a band t-shirt. Information about cost and ordering through the school will be sent home after the beginning of the school year.

There may be an event/function that requires an alternate uniform. If this is the case, prior notice will be given. Usually this only occurs at less formal events and almost always the default attire will be band t-shirt and blue jeans.

We strive to require students to wear professional yet versatile attire that can be used in a plethora of professional or formal settings in order that families don't have to purchase many new pieces of clothing for multiple organizations. If there is a concern about the cost of the shirt or elements of the uniform, arrangements can often be made, so don't hesitate to contact the director with questions or concerns.

FUNDRAISING

The Wildcat Band is a nonprofit organization that does not receive any annual funding from the school or district. Still, it is the goal of the organization to create as little financial burden for families as possible, so we require no participation fees and strive to give students access to as many materials as possible. Due to these factors, fundraising is hugely important to us. We rely on fundraising as a primary source of financial provision for the materials and activities necessary for the success of our ensemble. There will be several fundraisers throughout the school year. All band classes will be asked to participate, but families can also choose to make a donation to the Band in lieu of participating. Funds raised and donations received cover purchase of music, instruments, instrument repair, and other miscellaneous materials that contribute to the overall success of the ensemble and our ability to perform. If there are any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the director.

INSTRUMENTS & INSTRUMENT RENTALS

Every student is required to have an instrument and must rent/purchase this instrument by the second week of school. If a student is new to the ensemble, mouthpiece testing and instrument placement/choice will occur at the beginning of the year. After instrument placements are finalized, instruments can be rented/purchased. We recommend renting an instrument given that the price to purchase certain instruments can be rather high, but either purchasing or renting is a viable option. If a family already owns an instrument in good repair that a student can/wants to play, then they may use that instrument as well.

Most students, both returning and new, will rent an instrument from a third-party music store. We highly recommend Music Masters and Playground Music given that they're familiar with our ensemble, local, and have many programs to fulfill the needs of our young musicians. Pricing fluctuates depending on the instrument and can be discussed directly with the company. Usually, these rental contracts continue through the summer.

A rental night will be held at the school when parents and students can come and rent instruments from these providers in order that they don't have to go into the stores to talk with the representatives and get questions answered. This will take place during the first 2 weeks of the year. Dates and times for this event will be given out as soon as possible.

The school does own some instruments that are available for rent during the school year. Some students can/will rent instruments from the school. Sometimes it can be more convenient/affordable for a student/family to pursue rental through the school. When an instrument is rented through Playground or Music Masters, instrument repairs and other services are provided that are not provided with school rentals that ensure the health and longevity of those instruments that cannot be provided for school owned instruments. For all school-owned instrument rentals, a contract will be signed and a fee of \$50 will be assessed for the rental of that instrument. There is a limited availability of school owned instruments.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- a. A black 3-ring binder (1"-1.5" should be plenty) is required to keep all music, exercises, warm-ups, and reference sheets that will be provided throughout the year. This will be a separate binder from their other classes and will exclusively be used for band.
- b. A pencil with an eraser is required in all classes and at all events. A pencil pouch for pencils is recommended but not necessarily required.
- c. Certain materials are necessary to play an instrument. It is expected that students have everything they need to play their instrument and maintain the condition of their instrument. These materials will fluctuate depending on the instrument a student plays. Sometimes certain materials are provided with the rental of an instrument through a third party. These materials include but are not limited to instrument cases, mouthpieces, reeds, ligatures, valve oil, cork grease, slide grease, neck straps, swabs, etc.
- d. Students may be required to purchase a method book associated with the instruction provided on their instrument. Information for this book will be provided to each ensemble as the method books may differ from ensemble to ensemble.

TRAVEL

Occasionally it will be necessary for the band to travel to performance sites, festivals, field trips, etc. The Wakulla County School Board field trip policy requires students to travel to field trip locations on school provided transportation. Students are permitted to travel home from an event with their parent/guardian as long as the director has received a written notice signed by the parent/guardian stating that the transportation arrangements have been approved. In the days leading up to a field trip, students may bring these notes to the director, and they will take them to the administration for approval. These notes need to be received by the director at least 48 hours prior to the start of travel. When traveling with the band, students should remember that they are representing Wakulla Middle School and the entire WMS Band Program. All band rules, school rules, and dress code will be in effect. Always behave in a manner which you would be proud for others to observe. Unacceptable behavior will be dealt with harshly. In addition to

the rules set forth by the school and the band handbook (see "CONDUCT") each trip will have specific rules and guidelines. These rules and a complete itinerary will be distributed by the director prior to travel.

PRIVATE LESSONS & EXTRA INSTRUCTION

Although a student will learn the fundamental techniques on their instrument throughout their time in band, in class instruction must cover instrumental techniques on all instruments. Students can and should seek private lessons and/or opportunities for instruction on their instrument in order to challenge them and or/help them solidify the techniques they learn in class. These can include having a private lessons teacher/tutor, attending summer music camps, attending instrumental techniques clinics, attending masterclasses, etc. Private lessons allow the student to focus on instrument-specific information and to play music that he or she may not get the opportunity to play during a band class. Playing generally improves tremendously and it is very beneficial to the student. The Director has a list of private instructors in the area for interested parents. Private lessons and extra instruction do not replace the necessity for individual practice.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The School Board of Wakulla County, Florida does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information for applicants and employees, or any other reason prohibited by Federal and State law regarding non-discrimination. See 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d); 34 C.F.R. 106.9; 34 C.F.R. 110.25.

In addition, the School Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. See 34 C.F.R. 108.9.

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required in advance to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered to request reasonable accommodation. The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to any opportunity or event associated with Wakulla County Schools.

The designated Equity Coordinator, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator as required by 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d) is Lori Sandgren, Executive Director of Human Resources, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327; (850)926-0065; lori.sandgren@wcsb.us.

WAKULLA MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND
2023-2024

Mr. Riley Carrier, DIRECTOR
Mr. Simeon Nelson, PRINCIPAL

This handbook states the rules and regulations of the Wakulla Middle School Wildcat Band. This is an agreement between the Band, its' student members, and the parents/guardians of those members. All parties are aware of the obligations and agree to them as stated.

I have read the Wakulla Middle School Band Handbook. By signing this, both my band student and I agree to abide by the rules and obligations set forth. I hereby give my permission for my band student to participate in all scheduled band activities for this school year.

Student Name (PRINT)

Grade

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date