

Georgetown Independent School District

2019-2020
Middle School Band
Handbook

Benold Middle School

Forbes Middle School

Tippit Middle School

Wagner Middle School

2019-2020

Georgetown Middle School Band Handbook

PURPOSE

This handbook is designed to explain the policies, complexities, and concepts of a very large and proud organization. We hope it can be used to answer questions and define the boundaries that are important in keeping the Georgetown Middle School Bands an efficient organization. If utilized properly, the concepts of responsibility, teamwork, and good citizenship will develop. Those needing additional information should contact the director, who will assist with any topic.

AN OPEN LETTER TO BAND PARENTS

Dear Parent,

Thank you for reading this handbook, for your support of its contents, and especially for the opportunity to work with your sons and daughters! Our organization can reach its potential only if we have your active support.

There are several ways in which parents can provide support and encouragement for students - attending performances, encouraging home practice, attending parent meetings, and participating in fundraising activities to show your child you are part of the organization. Assisting him or her in meeting responsibilities provides incentive for your son or daughter to do well. In addition, it will improve the quality of the band program.

It is no secret that the success of our program is due in part to the tremendous support of the parents. We hope that you will enjoy being part of our organization!

Sincerely,

The Georgetown ISD Band Directors

STUDENT CONDUCT

1. Members are encouraged to cultivate an attitude of good discipline during rehearsals.
2. Band students serve as goodwill ambassadors for the school. Polite and courteous behavior is a credit to the organization, to the school, and to the parents.
3. Loud and boisterous activity by members when in public is not in the best interest of our image.
4. Food, gum, or drink is never permitted during rehearsal or performance. Water in a closed container is appropriate.
5. The use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is strictly forbidden.
6. Public displays of affection will not be permitted in the band hall, fine arts center, on school property, on buses, or at official functions. This offense will result in a written referral.
7. Inappropriate attire will not be allowed. Directors will instruct students as to the required attire before performances, events, and activities.
8. Any infraction of conduct, attitude, or responsibility will be dealt with in one or more of the following manners: *1. Conference with student; 2. Conference with parents; 3. Loss of privileges; 4. Loss of performance status; 5. Conference with Principal; 6. Probationary contract; 7. Expulsion from the program.*

Refer to the *Georgetown Independent School District Student Code of Conduct* which deals specifically with extracurricular activities.

Prevention of Hazing, Bullying and Intimidation in GISD Fine Arts Programs

It is the philosophy of the Georgetown ISD Fine Arts Department that every student enrolled in a Fine Arts course is entitled to a positive experience that encourages a life-long love for and involvement in the arts. Based upon this belief, it is critical that each student, parent and faculty member have a positive experience while participating in GISD Fine Arts activities. Students have the right to a safe and positive learning environment. This learning environment should be free of disruptions to the learning process. Hazing, bullying, intimidations, and physical or emotional threats must be considered as serious impediments to the learning process and cannot be tolerated. These incidents could occur in any combination between students, parents and/or staff members. Any event such as these must be reported to school district personnel immediately so that corrective actions can be made before events could escalate. All students must be made aware of how to recognize these dangerous behaviors and must be informed of

procedures to safely report these types of activities with no fear of retribution or negative consequence. Likewise, parents have the responsibility to report inappropriate activities to school district personnel with no fear of reprisal by district personnel toward any student in the program. The recommended course of action when inappropriate action is witnessed or experienced is as follows:

- a. Witness, victim or any other person who is aware of a potential problem should report the inappropriate behavior to the activity sponsor as quickly as possible – normally within 24 hours.
- b. The activity director will immediately report this information to campus level administration. The director and campus administration will begin investigating the report with the intention of quickly putting an end to the inappropriate behavior(s). The Director of Fine Arts will be informed of the report(s).
- c. When appropriate, the campus administrator will instigate disciplinary action if such action is warranted.
- d. Campus administration will report to the Director of Fine Arts: 1) the alleged incident; 2) investigation outcome(s) and 3) actions taken, if any, to correct the behavior(s)

CARE OF THE BAND HALL AND EQUIPMENT

1. NO FOOD, GUM, OR DRINK IS ALLOWED IN THE BAND HALL. These items need to be discarded in a trash container upon entering the band hall.
2. Practice rooms are for practice, recording assignments, playoffs, or private lessons only.
3. Keep instruments in cases with latches closed in your assigned locker when not in use.
4. Students will respect the property of others. Stealing or abusing others property is a serious offense and will be handled through the school administration. Personal items are not to be stored in the music offices, practice rooms, or band locker. Lockers must be kept clean.
5. Rehearsal hall chairs and stands are not to be removed from the room unless requested by a director.
6. Students will not use tuners, metronomes, or audio/visual equipment without a director's permission.
7. Periodic inspections will be made of school-owned instruments. Each student is financially responsible for any damage that occurs during the time it has been issued. Any damage to school property must be repaired, the item replaced, or a reimbursement made immediately.
8. The band department assumes no responsibility for personal items stored in the band hall. Items of personal value should be left at home or stowed in the student's backpack.
9. Only band members are allowed in the band rehearsal halls, practice rooms, and instrument storage rooms.
10. A phone will be available in the music office for use (*by music students only*) after rehearsals and band activities. Phone calls are not allowed during the school day.

11. Cell phones are not available for calls or texting during all rehearsals, performances, and other before and after school functions. Cell phones may be used by students when directors deem appropriate.

ATTENDANCE

With our limited rehearsal time, it is imperative that we make the most of each rehearsal. As a member of the Georgetown Middle School Band program, students have an obligation to fellow members to be at all rehearsals and performances on time, prepared and with all necessary working equipment.

1. Attendance is required at all rehearsals, sectionals, and performances. Absences from performance events cannot be excused except in extreme cases. Band is a performance medium and a student's grade cannot be evaluated clearly if he misses a performance.
2. Unexcused absences and tardies will adversely affect the student grade. Consequences for not attending a required event, rehearsal, or performance or for tardiness may result in, but are not limited to: *loss of performance status, loss of privileges, detention, or make-up assignments.*
3. Absences and tardies will be excused in the following cases: Medical emergency or personal injury, death in the family, special circumstances *known to the directors prior to the event.* Examples of unexcused absences and tardies include, but are not limited to: work, oversleeping, transportation, family outings, family reunions, family vacations & anything deemed unexcused by directors or principal.
4. Two (2) or more medical related absences per grading period, for any rehearsal or performance outside of the school day, will require a doctor's note.
5. All absences and tardies are to be reported by the parents to the directors.

FOOTBALL GAMES (Non-Beginners Only)

1. Seating formation will be adhered to at all times. Students are not allowed to move from their assigned seat during the game.
2. No food, drink, or gum is allowed while the band is performing except at times designated by directors. Parents or friends will **not** be allowed to bring drinks or snacks to band students during their performance.
3. Students should not play instrument unless the entire band is performing. Percussion is to play only with full band, cheerleaders, or drum features authorized by directors.
4. There will be no variation from the proper wearing of the uniform.

GISD POLICY FOR SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS - BUSES

1. All students will ride the buses to and from any event. **Exceptions to this rule require personal requests by the parents with approval of director prior to the event, or parents personally seeing a director when picking up their own child from an event.**
2. For specific performances, students will be assigned to a specific bus. Changing buses will not be permitted. Students are required to obey the driver, chaperone, or director.
3. While on the bus, there will be no loud talking, foul or abusive language, standing in the aisles, playing of instruments, or sitting on the backs of seats. All body parts will remain inside the bus at all times.
4. Instruments and other equipment will be carried on the bus and/or truck.

GRADING PROCEDURE

6th, 7th, 8th Grade: based on the GISD grading policy

Participation/Practice records (daily)	40%
Playing/Written Tests /Concerts (assessments)	60%

Band Placement

An audition is conducted in the latter half of the second semester. This audition places students in bands for the upcoming school year. Beginning Band members will be placed on a director-approved instrument. Students with a minimum of one year of participation in the band program will either be placed in Varsity Band, Non-Varsity Band, or Sub-Non-Varsity Band. Student placement is at the director's discretion, based on the student's skill level, program needs, and responsibility to the band program. No student will be allowed to change their band or instrument placement without the consent of their director.

Sectionals, Full Band Rehearsal, Participation and Practice

SECTIONALS - In this small/large group class, members primarily work on polishing and refining band literature and building technical skills necessary to be successful. **Each non-beginning band student is required** to attend one sectional per week.

1. Students will be assigned a time after or before school weekly.
2. Assignments and attendance will determine student's weekly grade.
3. Failure to attend will result in a "0" being recorded.
4. It is the student's responsibility to schedule a make-up.

FULL BAND REHEARSALS – As the band prepares for the first concert of the school year and UIL Contest, an afternoon or morning full band rehearsal will be implemented. These rehearsals are vital in reaching the bands

full potential. Students with conflict(s) due to other school related activities may be excused at the director's discretion.

PARTICIPATION – Students will be given a daily participation grade based on having all necessary materials for rehearsal including, but not limited to: instruments, reeds, oils, mutes, books, binder with pencils, music, etc.

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS – Each week, students will be responsible for completing and submitting a signed practice record, if required by campus director. Daily practice is expected.

Playing Tests

1. Performance on assigned selections.
2. Playing test assignments that may be recorded or in class.
3. Chair tests will be determined by the director.

Performances

This is a performing organization. With many potential conflicts with rehearsals and sectionals, there will be little chance for success unless a strict attendance policy is enforced. Student make-up assignments will follow the campus grading policy guidelines.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

T-SHIRT FEE

All band students will need to purchase a band shirt. This shirt will be worn at several band activities throughout the year. A letter will come home with details of payment.

UNIFORM

All band students will need a band uniform. Failure to wear a complete uniform to a performance, event, or activity may result in the student not being permitted to perform. A letter will come home with details of your band programs uniform requirements.

SCHOOL INSTRUMENT USAGE FEE

The Georgetown Independent School District is able to provide a limited number of musical instruments for student use throughout the school year. GISD staff members will provide appropriate instructions on the safe care and handling of this GISD-owned musical instrument. The usage fee for a calendar year is \$100. This fee covers the use of the instrument plus regular maintenance to be determined by GISD music staff members. This fee does not include repairs or replacement cost caused by student or parent/guardian negligence. For this reason, student and parent/guardians should work to insure the safety and security of the instrument at all times, including appropriate care regarding temperature and weather conditions. GISD staff members will verify the condition of the instrument upon check-out. The full repair or replacement cost for any damage caused by negligence after check out will be the sole responsibility of the student and the parent/guardian. As with all GISD property, if the student moves out of this attendance zone, the instrument will be returned to the assigned campus.

BAND COMPETITION and/or TRIP

GISD middle school bands may compete at a festival in conjunction with a fun trip. A student must be a member of the band at the time of the trip to be eligible to participate. This is not a mandatory event but is highly recommended. Performance through competitive endeavors provides further reinforcement of responsibility, cooperation, teamwork, and citizenship. Since the band trip is a reward for working hard during the year, students assigned to "In School Suspension" during the spring semester may not be eligible to attend. A letter will come home with more details.

INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION AND CONTEST FEES

During the course of the year, students have the opportunity to participate in various individual competitions/contests. (Ex: District/Region and Solo & Ensemble Contest.) For each activity, there will be an entry fee paid by the student. As the activity approaches, students will be made aware of the fee schedule. A letter will come home with details of payment.

PRIVATE LESSON PROGRAM

It is the goal of the Georgetown ISD Fine Arts Department to provide the very best learning experiences for each music student. One of the most valuable learning experiences is the opportunity for students to study privately with a professional music performer/instructor. This enrichment opportunity is open to all music students grades six through twelve that are enrolled in a GISD music course. While private lessons are not required of any student; experience shows that students enrolled in private lessons typically become more skilled, more focused, more dedicated, have more competitive success and generally enjoy music courses more than students not taking private lessons.

The GISD Private Music Lesson Program allows interested students the opportunity to receive additional individualized instruction beyond what can be provided by the GISD director. Some of the credit for the successes of the music groups of GISD no doubt is tied to the individual success of students engaged in the private lesson program.

The GISD music staff works to offer the highest quality private instruction. All instructors have been screened, completed fingerprinting and passed individual background checks required by Georgetown ISD.

Private lesson rates for teachers approved by GISD are as follows -

Per thirty minute lesson:

\$25.00 for teachers with less than three years experience teaching lessons in Georgetown ISD

\$30.00 for teachers with more than three years experience teaching lessons in Georgetown ISD

Students make payment directly to the private lesson teacher, not to the school or GISD.

Some private lessons take place during the school day - usually during your child's class period. Lessons are also offered before or after school depending on instructor availability. Lessons should be taken once per week for a minimum of 30 minutes each. However, other arrangements can be made with the individual private lesson teacher.

Please contact your campus music director to get recommendations about which of the GISD private lesson teachers would be best for your child. The GISD staff has the best understanding of the individual needs of each student and can make the best recommendations for pairing a student with a teacher.

BAND PARENT MEETINGS/ VOLUNTEERING

We encourage active and supportive band parents. Active band parents are an integral part of our entire band program. We hope that you will support your child during his or her band career. Please become involved by attending any parent meetings, fundraising endeavors, and volunteer activities.

Parent Volunteer Background Check

All parents are asked to fill out a volunteer background check located on the Georgetown ISD website. <http://www.georgetownisd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=16905>

Background checks need to be filled out at the start of each school year, after August 1. Please make sure to use the volunteer section and not the mentor option. Parents will not be allowed to volunteer for any school events until the background check has been successfully run. Please note that all district employees have already been through a background check and will not have to submit this information.

Please send an email stating completion to the band directors.

Addendums to this handbook

If the directors deem necessary, there may be additions or deletions to this handbook during the year. Students will receive an addendum page at that time.