

# **Cary-Grove Band Department**



## **Band Handbook 2014-15**

# Course Expectations

It is our desire to teach music in a way that is interesting, fun, and educational. In order to insure that every student has a positive experience, we have some classroom rules in place - please follow them so we may teach in a relaxed and efficient way, and not waste time on discipline issues or other interruptions.

- Be in your seat in the Band Room with your instrument, music, and necessary equipment no later than 2 minutes after the bell rings, or at the time a night rehearsal is scheduled to begin. If a rehearsal is to begin at 6:00, that is the time to be in your seat ready to play, not the time to arrive. We do not want to see any cell phone or headphones during class time— please put them away before you enter the band room!
- You need to come prepared every day with:
  - 1) Instrument in good working order.
  - 2) Your band music that has been practiced and prepared to the best of your ability.
  - 3) Mutes, valve oil, slide cream, reeds, etc. as appropriate for your instrument.
  - 4) A sharpened pencil
- The warm-ups and music for the day will be written on the board. Please get all the selections ready at the beginning of the period, so we don't waste rehearsal time.
- Band class does have homework – it's called practice! You must practice your instrument outside of school time so that you know your part. Daily practice time must be a minimum of 15-20 minutes each day. Band class is not designed to make you a better individual player, but rather a better ensemble musician. Any individual improvement in your playing must come through daily practice and private lessons (private lessons are highly recommended for every musician!).
- When a person of authority (director, drum major, section leaders, guest speaker) is talking, listen and show respect for that person by not talking.
- All scheduled nighttime concert band rehearsals and performances are considered part of the curriculum, and part of the grade for band. These rehearsals and performances are not optional, and the student must resolve any conflicts with other school activities, work, sports, etc. It is the student's responsibility to know all after school rehearsal and performance dates, and to resolve any conflicts well ahead of time. Write all night rehearsals and performance dates in your class assignment book that the school provides you.
- Concentrate during tuning and warm-ups - don't blow it off, or just play on "autopilot". Our sound is all we have. "***Suono es tutto***".
- Participate in all classroom activities whether playing, marching, singing, fogging, clapping, etc. Be focused and attentive during rehearsal. We are trying to make music and make you a better musician. All I want is your very best. Am I getting it now?

## Facilities / Equipment / Uniforms / Concert Dress

- Please keep your music folder in your band locker. If you take it home to practice (recommended), please make sure you bring it back with you for the next rehearsal. Do not leave any folder on your stand, in your instrument case, etc.
- All instruments must be kept in an instrument locker. No instruments may be kept on the floor. Keep the instrument storage lockers clean. They are for instruments only – no shoes, clothes, etc.
- Only percussionists may play the percussion equipment. This includes before rehearsals, after school, etc.
- All uniforms have been dry cleaned and pressed upon issue. After a game, the uniform must be hung up on a hanger and returned to the storage area. Hats will be issued to each student at the beginning of the year. It is the student's responsibility to maintain the hat and return it at the end of the year. A student who fails to return a hat will be charged for the price of a new one.
- Practice rooms are for music practice only. Absolutely no food is allowed in the practice rooms!
- Concert dress for our December and May concerts is solid black pants, a solid white shirt, and black shoes with black socks (the marching shoes are fine for concerts). Ladies may wear a black skirt instead of black pants. A tie is optional for the gentlemen. If you are going to wear a tie, no "novelty" ties, please.
- Concert dress for our "Pops" concert and graduation is very nice dress clothes (any color) and shoes. No jeans, T-shirts, or sneakers, please.

## Auditions for grades, band placement and chair assignments:

Every student enrolled in band is auditioned several times each year. These auditions are very important feedback for the students, and help the director assess student learning and progress. In addition, these auditions are used to assign which band a student will be enrolled in for the next semester, as well as seats within a section. A variety of different auditions are used to insure fairness for every band student. These may include:

- **Smart Music** – Each student will have regular Smart Music assignments. These assignments will always be for a grade, and sometimes they will be a seating audition as well. These assignments are mandatory, and must be completed by all students. It is not acceptable to not do the assignment and just take last chair. Smart Music is a core part of our music curriculum, and all students enrolled in band are required to do them. If you do not have an internet connection at home, you can do your Smart Music assignments at school – before school, after school, and during lunch or free periods.
  
- **Individual auditions** – Each student auditions individually for a director. The student is given a score based on the audition, and the director will give the student immediate feedback about the audition, discussing areas in which the student excelled, and which areas need improvement.
  
- **In-band videotaped auditions** – While playing a band piece together, each student is videotaped playing his/her part.
  
- **Section auditions** – Each member of a section takes a turn playing a prepared piece in front of the other members of the section.
  
- **Video auditions** – Each student will enter a practice room and record themselves playing the audition piece.

It is our goal to make sure every student is in the appropriate band and playing the appropriate music for their ability level. We don't *put* students into any particular band or seat; we just record what band or chair they have played their way into. The question you should ask yourself after an audition is "What band or chair did you earn my way into, and what can I do to prepare better next time?"

# Band Attendance Policy

All rehearsals and performances of the band department are considered part of the curriculum, whether they occur during the school day, after school, at night, or on weekends. Our three concerts per year are a core part of our curriculum (much like a final exam), and must take precedence over any extra-curricular activities. Any student who misses any of these rehearsals or performances due to an excused absence will have the opportunity to complete an alternate assessment, or take a lowered performance/attendance grade for the quarter. Unexcused absences cannot be made up, and will result in a lowered performance attendance grade.

**An absence will be considered excused if it a band absence form has been filled out, and falls under one of the following three categories:**

- 1) Student is involved in another school activity that conflicts with a rehearsal (our performances must still take precedence over school conflicts).**
- 2) Student is missing from school on the day of the rehearsal/performance due to illness.**
- 3) Family emergency.**

Work, too much homework, family events that are not emergencies (birthdays, etc.) are not considered excused absences. Students are given our band calendar at the beginning of the year; please check your schedules carefully and plan around these band events. It is not fair to the other students to have to play a concert or a rehearsal with some parts missing. If we know of your schedule ahead of time, we can prepare for your absence and practice without you

For Marching Band members, any student may have one excused absence per show and still be eligible to march the halftime show at the next game. The second absence (even if excused) will result in the student being cut from the next halftime show. This is not designed as a punishment but rather as a practical matter. Many times we only have 2 or 3 rehearsals for a show. If a student misses two or more rehearsals, we are not able to rehearse efficiently - we have already set the formations without them, and their appearance at the game would throw the formations off. We are very flexible in dealing with coaches, busy students, and excused absences, but we cannot make exceptions to this rule. If a student is merely late (or must leave early) due to an excused absence, they are still eligible to march in the next halftime show, provided they were in attendance for at least half of our rehearsal.

Unexcused absences cannot be made up, and will result in the student being cut from the next halftime show.

Students who have been cut from a halftime show *must* still come to the game and march with us in the pre-game show, and play with us in the stands. The pre-game show is the same for every game, so the student will not have missed any formations or new drills

If a student is involved in an activity that precludes *any* involvement in Marching Band, the student will be given two longer alternate assignments for the entire season. These students will not be eligible for any trips or awards involving the Marching Band.

Students will be given up to two weeks to complete the alternate assessment for an excused absence. Alternate assessments may include: extra Smart Music assignments, a paper on a music related topic, a concert review, or another assignment at the discretion of the director.

# **Band Grading Policy**

Any student may take band pass/fail. While we encourage all students to take band for a grade, we understand that there are some circumstances in which a student is better served to take band pass/fail. Please see Mr. Magnini before midterm of the 1st quarter if you would like to take band pass/fail.

Band grades are based on:

## **25% Auditions**

The student will receive a grade based on one or more auditions involving band music, sight-reading, and / or prepared etudes. Students will be given pieces appropriate for their level of experience and ability, and will know well ahead of time what music/scales/etudes are expected at the audition. These auditions may be in person, video, or Smart Music auditions. All students are encouraged to ask for help with any music.

## **15% Smart Music assignments**

All students will have regular Smart Music assignments due. These will be listed as “LAB” assignments in the gradebook. These are mandatory assignments, and must be completed on time. Each day an assignment is late, 10% will be deducted from the score.

## **20% Performance attendance**

This grade is based on student attendance at all concert rehearsals and performances. A student that has an excused absence from a performance due to illness or family emergency will be able to take an alternate assessment to make up the grade. While we are flexible with excused absences due to extra-curricular activities for rehearsals, our performances must take precedence over any extra-curricular activities. Unexcused absences cannot be made up, and will result in a lowered performance attendance grade.

## **40% Ensemble Collaboration and Participation**

This is the most important aspect of playing in band, and so it is the most heavily weighted. The participation grade is based on the student having the proper materials (instrument in good working order, music, mutes, valve oil, slide cream, reeds, etc. as appropriate for their instrument), and the proper attitude, focus, and behavior. Any student who is trying their best to become a better musician, and who listens to the director and responds enthusiastically will get an excellent grade in participation.

**Parents and students:**

Please review the information in this handbook. After familiarizing yourself with all policies, please sign and date this form, rip it out of this handbook, and return to Mr. Magnini by Friday, September 6th, 2013.

As a member of the Cary-Grove Band Program, I have read and understand the policies regarding Course Expectations, Facilities, Equipment, Uniforms, Concert Dress, Auditions, Attendance, and Grading. I have received the band calendar, and plan to be in attendance at all of our concerts and other performances. If there is an unavoidable conflict, I will notify Mr. Magnini via the online band absence form, and will complete the alternate assessment or take a lowered performance attendance grade.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature      date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature      date

Please provide us with your home phone number and email address, so we may contact you if needed. We can send out reminders for important dates through mass emails (if you wish), in addition to having the dates posted on our website and in this band handbook. Some dates may be subject to change, so check our website regularly.

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Parent Phone Number                      Parent email address