

Granbury Middle School Band

Beginning Band Handbook

2020-2021



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Band Directors

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Welcome to Beginning Band!

It is extremely important that you know what is expected of parents and students.

Please take the time to carefully read the beginning band handbook.

What is a beginning band?

Beginning band is made up of first-year players. This means that these students have not played a band instrument before. They spend the first couple weeks of beginning band learning the fundamentals of music (reading notes, counting and vocabulary) and after they have a firm foundation, they will begin playing their instruments.

Does beginning band take up a lot of time outside of school?

Absolutely not! The only time we need to meet afterschool is to practice as a full band prior to our concerts. These rehearsals are required and are for a grade. You will be given plenty of time to prepare your schedule for these rehearsals.

But can't you just rehearse during the school day? Why after school?

Beginning band classes are broken up into instrument families. This means that the whole band does not get to practice together during the school day. For a concert to be successful, the students need to hear what they sound like as a full band (all instruments together) and this can only take place during after school rehearsals. We have no more than four after school rehearsals during the year to prepare for our performances.

How many performances does the beginning band participate in?

The beginning band has two or three concerts throughout the year, and students perform in a solo/ensemble contest in the spring. All performances are a major grade and are mandatory. You will be given plenty of time to prepare your schedule for these events.

What is expected from my student in beginning band?

Your student will be learning how to play their instrument and read music. This requires **DAILY** practice at home. Eligibility applies to band just like any other extra-curricular activity. Your child must remain eligible by passing ALL their classes.

Instruments sometimes need maintenance or new supplies. Students are expected to have enough supplies to keep their instrument in working condition. Should the instrument need to go to the repair shop, a note must be sent with the student to excuse their participation.

Policies

POLICY #1: Be in the right PLACE at the right TIME with the right MATERIALS and with the right ATTITUDE

POLICY #2: Do not do ANYTHING that prevents the students' ability to learn

POLICY #3: Do not do ANYTHING that prevents the director's ability to teach

POLICY #4: Be EXCELLENT at ALL times!

Procedures

- Students will enter the band hall quietly, courteously, and in an orderly manner
- Only band students are ever allowed in the band hall
- Students will not bring food, drink, or gum/candy into the band hall
- Clear water is allowed if in a proper water bottle (this is a GMS policy)
- All food/drink must be disposed of at the entrance trash can
- Students will get their instrument and binder and take it to their assigned seat
- A student will be considered tardy if they are not in the band hall when the bell rings
- Students will check the smart board for the agenda and complete the bell ringer activity
- When instructed to do so, students will assemble their instruments
- Students will not play other student's instruments.
 - This includes percussion and school owned instruments
- Never leave your instrument unattended or with a friend
- Students must have ALL of the following items to receive full participation credit:
 - Instrument in working condition
 - Music binder and book
 - Sharpened pencil
- Near the end of class, students will be instructed to put their instruments away in an orderly fashion
- Instruments are stored in the band locker during the day
- At the end of each school day, students are expected to take their instrument home and practice
 - Your child CANNOT be a good player if they do not practice!
- The band hall is open before school most days for practicing
 - A sign will be posted on the band hall door when the band hall is closed
- The band hall is open after school for practicing every day except Fridays
- Students are expected to bring their instruments back to school the next day
- The band hall is open before school for students to put their instrument in their band locker

Please encourage your student to practice every day!

Attendance Policy

Unlike most other classes, it is NOT possible to make-up most of the activities that the band participates in throughout the year. Because of this, all rehearsals and performances are **MANDATORY**. If you absolutely must miss an activity due to an unavoidable conflict, a note must be received at least a full day prior to the absence. Discretion will be left to the band director to approve absence. If a family emergency occurs, a written note explaining the situation will be needed as soon as possible. We must have record of this absence. This note is due as soon as possible. Please submit your notes in a timely fashion. Please schedule doctor, dentist, orthodontist, or other appointments around band activities and class time as these types of absences will not be excused.

The majority of students who have missed events have missed due to lack of planning or lack of communication. *Most absences can be avoided by planning ahead.*

Some basic solutions to scheduling issues:

- Make sure you have an up-to-date calendar at all times
 - Car pool with some fellow band members
 - Always plan ahead! Don't procrastinate!
 - Check the band website and your email often!

Behavior Expectations

1. All students are expected to behave in and out of the band hall
 2. Being in band is a privilege
 3. Band students do NOT go to ISS or DAEP
 4. Band students do NOT get detention
 5. Band students do NOT speak poorly to teachers, staff, or other students
 6. Manners matter!
 7. Any student who breaks the expectations of the GMS band program can be removed at any time at the discretion of the band director
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Discipline Procedures

- Infractions will be handled using the following based on the severity of the infraction:
 1. Warning
 2. Low Level Referral and Parent Contact
 3. Parent/Student Conference with Behavior Contract
 4. Office Referral
 5. Removal from Band
 - A student may be removed from band at the discretion of the band director if necessary at any time with proper documentation
 - It is never the goal of the band director to remove a student from the band program
 - Most discipline issues can be avoided by maintaining an open line of communication between the band director and the parent/guardian
 - IMPORTANT:
 - Students who are disrespectful in other classes; will not be allowed to remain in the GMS band program
 - Students who are assigned ISS/DAEP/Suspension; may not be allowed to remain in the GMS band program
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Grading policy

- Minor Grades
 - Daily Grades
 - Students will receive a daily grade each time they have class.
 - A student will receive 100 points if they have all materials
 - A student will receive 50 points if they do not have their binder and book
 - A student will receive 0 points if they do not have their instrument
 - These grades are final and cannot be made up
 - Sticker Lines/Pass-offs
 - Sticker lines detail what should be practiced for a particular six weeks in order to improve certain skills and fundamentals and to stay on the same level as the class
 - Failure to attempt for stickers by the due date will result in a zero for the objective
 - Sticker line achievement will be used to help determine a student's readiness for promotion
- Major Grades
 - Chair/Playing Tests
 - Weekly tests will be given during class to make sure each student is achieving their goals

(Grading Policy Continued)

- Performances
 - All performances are mandatory and cannot be made up
 - An unexcused absence at a performance is grounds for removal from the band program
 - A student will receive 100 points for being in attendance at the performance
 - A student will receive 0 points for NOT being in attendance
 - Illness/Family emergencies will be dealt with by the directors
 - Athletic conflicts are not an excused absence
 - Any athletic conflicts must be addressed ahead of time
- End of the Year Placement Test
 - This test will assess each student's individual ability and will help the directors place them in the correct level ensemble for the following school year.

Academic eligibility

- I. If a student receives a grade below 70 in any subject, that student will become ineligible for extra-curricular activities starting on the Friday following the end of the six week grading period in which the failing grade was received.
- II. A student can regain eligibility on the Friday following the three week grading period if the student is passing EVERY class and receives no remark of "currently failing" on his/her three week progress report

PASS YOUR CLASSES SO YOU CAN HAVE FUN WITH THE BAND!

Parents, we ask that you continue to supervise your child and communicate with their teachers if any questions should arise. Students need to understand that their grades have a direct influence on other students as well as themselves.

School Instrument Use and Repair Policy

School instruments are instruments owned by Granbury ISD. (This policy does not apply to those who are renting an instrument from the music store) Students using these instruments are required to pay a **yearly \$100.00 maintenance fee**. This fee is due by the end of the first semester. Payment plans available.

Students are expected to take care of their instruments properly. Parents are responsible for any repairs above \$100.00. *Parents renting instruments through a music company are responsible for making payments each month*

Private lessons

Why should my child take private lessons?

Private lessons offer students the opportunity to receive individualized instruction from a *professional musician* on their instrument. Lessons can be an incredible benefit to all band students. The individual attention given to your student improves the performance level playing and their enjoyment of their instrument. The key to success with private lessons is to start early and continue throughout the school year.

Fundraising

The GMS band does many things that are beyond the ability of the school district's financial reach. Because of this, students in the band program participate in fundraisers.

- Two fundraisers per year
- **Any monies submitted to the GMS band program are non-refundable regardless of the student's ability to participate in activities**
- These fundraisers benefit the activity fund
- This fund pays for clinicians, food, specials events, trips, and socials
- All students benefit from the activity fund
- All students are expected to participate or to "buy-out" their portion

Fundraising is a vital part of the success of our band program. Without it, we are unable to do the things that set band apart from a regular class. If everyone does their part in meeting the goals set for each fundraiser, the band will continue to operate efficiently and meet established expectations.

Uniform Policy

Casual Uniform:

- Black Band Polo shirt or Band T-shirt
- Blue jean pants
- Closed-toed shoes

Students will be informed in advance which uniform to wear at a specific event

Social Media

Website: www.granburyisd.org/gmsband

- Visit often to get announcements and be able to print out any forms/handouts.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/GMSPIRATEBAND

- We welcome parents and students to “like” the page so you can receive announcements and keep up to date with the band.

Twitter: Follow the band on twitter @GranburyMSBand

Instagram: @granburymband

Remind Text Blasts

In order for us to utilize all methods of communication, we use a program called “Remind” to send text blasts to parents and students. This program is safe and effective. Teachers and parents/students are able to exchange texts in a secure and safe manner. This is simply another way for us to share information. Your phone number will not be shared or displayed in any way.

Message/data fees do apply

Text to: 81010

Text Code:

Social Media/Director Communication

In order to maintain high ethical standards, the directors of the Granbury Pirate Band will not approve any “Friend Requests” from students or parents on any social media website (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

We ask that students and parents only use the district email addresses and telephone number on the cover of this handbook for contacting the directors. Both directors receive email on our cell phones and we will answer your emails as soon as possible.

If a student somehow obtains a director’s personal cell phone number and texts or calls that director, we are required to report that contact to the office.

Texts through the remind text app are allowed and secure for all parties.

How You Can Help Your Musician Succeed

It has been proven time and time again that music students are the most successful when their family takes a personal interest in their music practice at home. There is nothing that will assure your child's success in the study of music or the speed of his/her progress more than your sincere interest in his/her music participation. Far more progress is made when practicing happens every day. The progress made with 150 minutes of practice on Saturday is not the same as 35 minutes each day of the week. We are trying to build muscles and reinforce the learning that is happening.

Learning to play a band instrument is like running a marathon – don't try to train all at once.

Here are some things you as a parent can do that will help your student:

- Set aside a regular time and a suitable place for your child to practice
 - This place should be free of distractions and have a solid chair and music stand
 - Encourage your child to adopt a schedule of 30-45 minutes a day, six to seven days per week
 - Listen to your child and notice improvements
 - Remind your child to always use their metronome
 - This will greatly enhance his/her sense of pulse
 - Make sure your child always uses a music stand to avoid developing bad habits
 - Select a suitable place to store your child's instrument in the home and show that you also think it is important
 - Make sure that your child is on time to rehearsals and lessons from the first day
 - See the child's teacher at regular intervals to keep yourself informed about successes and struggles
 - Attend all concerts! It really encourages the kids!
 - Help your child understand that the more they practice now, the more fun and enjoyment they will have later
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