Oak Grove Middle School

BAND HANDBOOK

2017 – 2018

Mission Statement

The mission of the Oak Grove Middle School Band Program is to maintain a high standard of musical excellence in a collaborative, healthy-learning atmosphere.

Through constant effort and a passion for what we do, we aim to become a shining beacon for the arts in our community.

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OAK GROVE BANDS

"Building the Sound of Grizzly Pride"

Dear Students and Parents,

First, I would like to welcome all of the 6th grade students and parents, as well as any other students and parents that are new to Oak Grove Middle School. We are so glad that you decided to join our band family. For those returning, welcome back! Another year of making music is upon us, and I am incredibly excited to begin what is sure to be a fun and productive year.

I would also like to formally introduce myself. My name is Mr. Alex Larsen, and I will be your Band Director for the upcoming school year. I recently graduated from Western Carolina University this past May, earning a Bachelor's degree in Music Education with a concentration in clarinet performance. For those of you I have met already, I would like to sincerely thank you for the warm welcome I have received. Oak Grove is a fantastic place to be, and I am very grateful that I will have the opportunity to start my career with such a supportive community around me.

This Band Handbook provides specific guidelines and information regarding participation in the band. The guidelines entailed in this document must be followed. We ask that you carefully read this handbook detailing student expectations in our program. Please acknowledge that you have read this handbook by returning the "Handbook Contract" found in the back of this document to Mr. Larsen by the deadline indicated.

Students who become a part of our band program can look forward to a comprehensive, sequential music education through their years at Oak Grove Middle School. Throughout their study, students will be provided a thorough foundation in individual performance fundamentals with an emphasis on developing ensemble concepts and skills.

We are proud of the constant pursuit of excellence that our program undertakes each and every year, and we are excited for you to be a part of it! With your help and support, we look forward to continuing to innovate the musical landscape of our community and beyond. If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this handbook, please call the band office at (336) 474-8250, or email the Band Director at alexanderlarsen@davidson.k12.nc.us.

Sincerely,

Mr. Alex Larsen
Band Director, Oak Grove Middle School

Important Dates

Please note that some dates listed below are tentative and subject to change. These dates will be confirmed ASAP and communicated to you through our website, Remind, email, etc.

10/17: Davidson County Marching Band Night, Central Davidson HS, 5:30-9:00pm

***(10/19: 7th and 8th Grade Fall Concert, OGMS Gym, 7:00pm)**
8th Grade Call Time: 6:00, OGMS Gym
7th Grade Call Time: 6:15, OGMS Gym

11/7: All-County Auditions, East Davidson HS, 3:30-9:00pm

***11/27: All-County Rehearsal, Thomasville HS, 4:00-8:30pm**
Only required for students in the All-County band

***11/28: All-County Rehearsal, Thomasville HS, 8:30am-3:00pm**
Only required for students in the All-County band

***11/28: All-County Concert, Finch T Austin Auditorium, 7:00-9:30pm**
Only required for students in the All-County band

***(12/7: Holiday Concert, OGMS Gym)**
6:00pm: 6th Grade Performance – Call Time: 5:30
7:00pm: 7th and 8th Grade Performances – Call Time: 6:00 in the gym supporting our 6th graders!

1/6: All-District Auditions, Central Davidson MS

***2/16 – 2/18: All-District Clinic, Appalachian State University**
Only required for students in the All-District band

3/3: All-State Auditions, Central Davidson MS

***TBD: Northwestern District MPA Festival**
Only required for 7th and 8th grade students

***5/4 – 5/6: All-State Clinic, UNC Chapel Hill**
Only required for students in the All-State band

***TBD: Spring Concert, OGHS Auditorium**

Before every performance, a minimum of two full ensemble after-school rehearsals will be held. More information on the dates and times of these rehearsals will be distributed at least two weeks before the first rehearsal day.

* - Required event
( ) – Tentative

Program Expectations

"Excellence is not a skill. It is an attitude." - Ralph Marston

This attitude of excellence must begin with an attitude of success. As teachers, parents, and administrators, all of our actions must be geared towards creating positive experiences for these young student musicians. A positive experience must begin with an understanding of the expectations for those who participate in the OGMS Band Program.

1) BE PROMPT

"Early is on time, on time is late, and late is unacceptable." Students must be prompt when arriving every day for rehearsal, for any after school rehearsal, performances, trips, etc. Timeliness is key to success, and therefore key to a pursuit of excellence.

2) BE PREPARED

This expectation addresses two different areas of preparedness. The first is having all required materials (listed on page 11) for class, every day. Remember: it is always better to have something and not need it than to need something and not have it.

Second, students are responsible for preparing their parts to each and every piece we play in band. Practice is a crucial tool for success in the band world. Some may have to practice their instrument more than others to prepare a piece of music just as some have to study longer for a test. Whatever the case may be, all students should practice and prepare music for performances well ahead of the concert date.

3) BE RESPECTFUL

Students should demonstrate a mutual respect for their TEACHERS, CLASSMATES, and SURROUNDINGS. Disrespect, bullying, or anything that creates a negative learning atmosphere will not be tolerated in this band program. Surroundings include, but are not limited to, the band room, instruments, other equipment, storage areas, etc. We are fortunate enough to have a fine facility to rehearse in; we need to keep it that way.

4) NO FOOD, DRINKS, OR GUM ALLOWED IN THE BAND ROOM

As it was mentioned before, we need to respect our surroundings. There are instruments that are worth thousands of dollars in our band room, and one spilled drink or playing right after eating a snack could severely damage the instrument. If food, drinks, or gum is brought into the band room and consumed at any point, it will be confiscated/disposed of by Mr. Larsen. (The only possible exception is bottled water)

6th Grade Band

Come and learn to play an instrument in a fun, constructive environment!

Beginning students may choose one of four instruments: Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet or Trombone. Major focus points are posture, breathing, reading rhythms and musical notation accurately, understanding musical terminology, instrument care, and developing listening skills. Yearly, the 6th Grade Band will play at least 2 concerts. Upon successful completion of this course, students may be promoted to 7th Grade Band.

Grading

A student's grade in band is a balanced reflection of musical achievement, technical skill on an instrument, participation in band activities, and effort both within class and at home. The grade is made-up of many things categorized into groups to align with the Davidson County Schools Grading Policy: Major grades (40%) include things like concerts and in-class tests. Minor grades (35%) would be things such as quizzes and pass-offs. Classwork/Homework grades (25%) are worksheets, daily participation and at-home practice. We have defined items from the categories in more detail below.

(The grading scale (A - F) may be found in the OGMS Student Handbook located in their agenda.)

Participation

You will receive a daily rehearsal grade that is based on the following:

1. You are prepared with instrument, music, pencil, and you have practiced. If you do not have your required items, you will receive a 0 for the day's participation grade
2. You are on-time and seated when class begins
3. You participate in class appropriately
4. You perform or "pass-off" required lines or music. (may not be daily)

Practice Records

6th grade is a crucial time to develop instrumental skills; therefore, consistent practice is expected of all students so that they can build a successful foundation for the rest of their involvement in music. Practice records will be collected weekly once they begin. Students must practice at least 60 minutes a week (less than 10 minutes a day if practiced daily).

Some parent tips for encouraging successful practice time at home

1. Provide a quiet place for practice (free from electronic devices and other distractions.)
2. Encourage regular practice in a positive manner. Students may not always be able to hear daily improvement, but it is happening.
3. Provide a working instrument that is in good condition. Quality yields quality.
4. Give encouragement and praise and show commitment in their study of music. Some concepts will be learned very quickly and others will require much practice. Encourage patience and persistence.
5. Have them perform for you often. It means more to the student if they have the opportunity to actually play for an audience. Schedule some private "concerts" for your family!

Playing Tests and Quizzes

Playing tests/quizzes will consist of students playing specific music on their instruments in order to chart mastery of specific skills. Students will be given a minimum of one week's notice before a test and two day's before a quiz.
There will be several playing tests/quizzes during each quarter. Written quizzes and tests will also be given periodically in order to test students' understanding of musical concepts, vocabulary, and rules.

Performances

Concert performances are one of the most important and fun things we do in band! For all purposes, these are like our final exams. Students will be graded on how well they prepare for and perform their concert music. Most of the concert music will be different from and in addition to the music they are working on in their band books. There will be more on concert performances later in the handbook.

Switching to a better version of the same instrument (Stepping-up)

1) Most of the instruments that the beginners have are "student model" instruments. These instruments will provide them with all they need in order to have a successful shot at learning to play them. Some students, especially those that excel quickly, may be interested and ready to "step-up" to a more advanced version of their current instrument. These instruments have advanced features that will increase their playing ability and will make them sound even better. I recommend that parents check with the band director before purchasing or renting any type of "step-up" instrument. There are instruments out there that are branded "step-up", "intermediate", or even "professional" by the manufacturer and are really nothing more than a beginner horn with a few extra features. Again, check with me to make sure you really are getting a "step-up" model with the features needed by the advancing musician. Parents and students are encouraged to wait until at least the spring of 6th grade year to consider stepping-up.

2) Larger wind instruments (tuba, french horn, bass clarinet, etc.) Later in the school year, some students will be invited to play some of our school's larger "color" instruments, named that because they provide additional tone colors to our band, increasing our band's rich sound. Most of these instruments are owned by OGMS and would not have to be purchased or rented by the student. Students will be invited to try-out on these instruments based on their interest and if the director thinks they would be successful on that instrument. More specific details will be explained to each student when invited to play one of these instruments.

3) Percussion and Alto Saxophone
In late November, students that are interested will be given the opportunity to "audition" for a spot in the OGMS percussion or alto saxophone sections. We will have a mini-camp for each that will teach some basic skills and then students will be selected. Approximately 6-8 percussionists and 4-6 alto saxophone players will be selected based on skill, previous work ethic and attitude. Only the hardest-working OGMS band students will be considered for these sections. Students that have taken private piano lessons are encouraged to audition for percussion and alto saxophone players must have started on clarinet.

7th Grade Band

OGMS 7th Grade Band students will continue to work on skills learned in beginning band. They are grouped into two classes: Woodwinds and Brass/Percussion. Major focus points are posture, breathing, reading rhythms and musical notation accurately, understanding musical terminology, instrument care, developing listening skills and performing in a large ensemble setting.

Students will also have the opportunity to participate in small ensembles, county and district honor bands, and solo/ensemble and concert Music Performance Adjudication concerts (explained later in the handbook.)

Yearly, the 7th Grade Band will play at least 2 concerts and will be given the opportunity to perform in additional concert events as explained later in the handbook. Upon successful completion of this course, students may be promoted to 8th Grade Band.

Grading

Grading for 7th Grade Band will be the same as 6th Grade Band, except:

- No required practice records. Students are still expected to take home their instrument twice a week, ESPECIALLY on Friday's. No instruments should be left in the band room over the weekend.
- Additional grades for any extra performances

8th Grade Band

The 8th Grade Band is the top performance ensemble at OGMS. Advanced students will continue study on their instruments and are divided into two classes: Woodwinds/Percussion or Brass. Major focus points are posture, breathing, reading rhythms and musical notation accurately, understanding musical terminology, instrument care, developing listening skills, and participation skills in large and small ensembles.

Students will also have the opportunity to participate in small ensembles, county and district honor bands, and solo/ensemble and concert Music Performance Adjudication concerts (explained later in the handbook.)

Yearly, the 8th Grade Band will play at least 2 concerts and will be given the opportunity to perform in additional concert events as explained later in the handbook. Upon successful completion of this course, students may be promoted to High School Band.

Grading

Grading for 8th Grade Band will be the same as 6th Grade Band, except:

- No required practice records. Students are still expected to take home their instrument twice a week, ESPECIALLY on Friday's. No instruments should be left in the band room over the weekend.
- Additional grades for any extra performances

Required Materials

Part of being prepared for success is having the right equipment and supplies. Below is a list of all materials every student will need for class:

- **Instrument** – personal or school-owned
- **Tradition of Excellence red book (6th graders only)**
- **Black band binder** – please note that this binder should be dedicated only to band music and other important handouts; do not use it for other classes
- **Pencils** – always have a pencil with you in class. Never write on music or other materials with pen or a marker unless cleared by Mr. Larsen
- ***Accessories*** – In the "Important Forms" section, there is a checklist of materials, including all necessary accessories for each instrument group. There is also an accessory order form on the back of that form. If you need to order anything, fill it out and return it to Mr. Larsen with cash or a check made out to "The Band Company"

Instruments

Personal Instruments

Instruments that are owned (including rentals) by students may be stored in the band room during the school day and may be left overnight. However, instruments must go home twice a week, especially on Friday for the weekend.

The student is responsible for any costs involved in keeping the instrument in playing condition including supplies (reeds, oil, etc.) and repairs that may be needed. Many instruments that are being rented (rent-to-own in most cases) from a music store will be serviced as part of the rental fee. Students are expected to have instruments that are in working order at all times, including working reeds for woodwind players. Instrument cases should also have a nametag for identification.

Parents are encouraged to record information about the instrument including serial number, make, description, purchase/lease information and even take pictures of the instrument in case of theft or damage. The OGMS Band Office will also gather this information.

School-Owned Instruments

Instruments that are owned by OGMS will be stored at the school and checked-out by students when played. OGMS will be responsible for the maintenance and repair of these instruments. Damage caused purposely by a student will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Students that play these instruments may take them home to practice or will set-up a time outside of class to practice them at school (for larger instruments like tuba or percussion.)

School-owned instruments are not to be treated as "free" instruments. Students must purchase basic supplies (reeds, etc.) and mouthpieces. Students should treat these instruments as if their parents purchased them. **Some of these instruments exceed $6000.00 in value!**

Band Room Etiquette

As mentioned before, we must have respect for our surroundings. Such a new and fine facility like our band room needs to be maintained for years and years to come. That being said, here are some rules pertaining to the upkeep of the band room:

- No Littering (use a trash can)
- No food, candy, GUM, or drinks of any kind, except for water (must be in a container with a lid that closes)
- No graffiti of any kind, especially on the music stands
- Keep instruments on the shelves when not in use (not the floor)
- Do not touch instruments or equipment that are not yours, especially the percussion equipment
- Ask permission to enter the band office
- No need to touch the light switches. Our lights are automated and go on/off by themselves. Students found messing with the switches, especially in the practice/storage rooms will be disciplined

Attendance Policy/ Concert Information

Participation in all OGMS performances is mandatory!

These performances are our "final exams" and demonstrate the culmination of many weeks of hard work by our students. They are some of the most rewarding and fun

events we have in band! Each grade level will have at least two formal full band concerts this school year. There will be opportunities for others in the 7th and 8th grade ensembles, and they will be announced well in advance of the event.

Concert Absences/Absences from any required event

a. **Excused** – Absences may be excused if proper notice is given AND the reason is significant (planned wedding, major family vacation, etc.). The student must fill out an Absence Request form (located in back of handbook) and submit it to Mr. Larsen one week before the event in question.

   Last minute absences may also be excused, but only in the case of illness, death in the immediate family, or a legitimate emergency situation. Please contact Mr. Larsen by email or phone as soon as possible (preferably before the concert or event in question) regarding the absence.

   alexanderlarsen@davidson.k12.nc.us or send Mr. Larsen a Remind message

   Excused absences from a concert must be made-up through a two-part assignment. The student will perform an excerpt of the concert music and will write about the piece performed. Work must be completed within one week of the absence

b. **Unexcused** - missing a concert performance or required event for any reason other than those listed above will be unexcused. "I didn't have a ride," "I forgot," etc. are unacceptable. An unexcused absence may not be made-up and will result in a significant lowering of the student's grade.

Concert Attire

More information will be sent home regarding concert attire for the upcoming school year.

Concert Etiquette

We will have lessons in proper behavior and procedures as a performer in a concert. It is important to both the listener and performer that proper behavior is followed during the concert so that all in attendance may enjoy the performance. Concerts are formal events and should be treated as such.

Communication

Communication is an integral part of a successful band program. Mr. Howell, the Band Boosters, and I will be relaying pertinent information through a variety of methods. I have listed them for you below:

Remind: This tool is one we constantly use for quick reminders about upcoming concerts, events, fundraisers, trips, etc. If you do not already follow the Oak Grove Middle School Band group, text @e98b4b to 81010.

Website: oakgrovebands.com

Visit the website and register for the booster email list to receive updates!

Email: Parents, please provide your email on the appropriate form located in the back of the handbook

Mr. Larsen: alexanderlarsen@davidson.k12.nc.us

Phone: Parents, please provide your phone number on the appropriate form located in the back of the handbook

Band Room: 336-474-8250 ext. 6044

Oak Grove Band Boosters: Fundraising and Student Accounts

Purpose of the Oak Grove Band Boosters

The Oak Grove Band Boosters has been organized as a non-profit support organization for both the middle school and high school band program. It functions as an incorporated group with the purpose of supporting the Oak Grove Directors and Staff, Band Students, and the Band Program through fundraising efforts and positive "word-of-mouth" promotions. Parents/guardians of current Oak Grove Band Students are automatically members of this booster group and will be invited and encouraged to provide input and support in order to help our band grow and prosper.

Fundraising

The administration of Davidson County Schools was very thoughtful when planning our band facility and allotting funds for instruments and music supplies. Although we did get a great deal of instruments and equipment, there are still many needs. Sheet music and additional instruments top the list of things still needed. Throughout the school year, the Oak Grove Middle School and Oak Grove High School bands will have different fundraisers in order to purchase these supplies and to help provide even more opportunities to our young musicians. Our Band Boosters will administer all of our fundraisers. All OGMS Band Students will participate in our fundraisers as all OGMS Band Students will benefit from the profits generated.

Student Accounts - (8th Grade Only)

Many of the 8th Grade Band Students will make the wise decision to continue playing their instrument in high school. Currently, the Oak Grove High School Band Program has fees associated with participation in marching band. A percentage of the profits generated by the 8th Grade Band Students will be placed into an "account" which will build throughout the year, helping to pay for camp expenses next summer. More details about student accounts will be shared later.

The next few pages contain important forms.

Please sign and complete the "Handbook Contract" and "Student Information" forms and return them to Mr. Larsen by Friday, September 1st.

If you complete the instrument accessory checklist and realize you are missing something, feel free to complete The Band Company's order form on the back.

OGMS Band Handbook Contract 2017-2018

As OGMS Band Parents and Students, we have read and understand all information contained in the OGMS Band Handbook. We also understand the commitment that being in the OGMS Band represents.

OGMS Band Students will hold themselves to the highest possible standard of behavior in the band classroom, at all performances, as well as when participating as an audience member. OGMS Band Students will maintain good grades in ALL of their classes and will make-up missed work immediately.

OGMS Band Parents will actively and positively support their child's musical education and the OGMS Band Program. We also understand that if questions or issues arise, we will contact the band director as soon as possible.

Student Signature:_____ Date:_____

Parent Signature:_____ Date:_____

Student Information
2017-2018

Student Name:_____
(First) (Last)

Grade:_____ T-shirt size (Youth L – Adult XL):_____

Parent/Guardian Names:_____

_____

Preferred parent/guardian phone #:_____

Email address(es) you would like us to send band information:

_____

_____

Oak Grove Middle School Band Checklist

Below is a checklist of required items band students will need for the following school year. Please review the list with your students and return the completed form by Friday, August 22nd.

Name: _____ Instrument: _____ Grade: ___

Instrument

- ❏ Personal
- ❏ Rental (music store being rented from: _____)
- ❏ School-Owned (oboe, bassoon, bass/contrabass clarinet, tenor/bari sax, horn, euphonium, tuba, percussion)

Instrument Accessories - WOODWIND players

- ❏ Reeds
- ❏ Cork grease
- ❏ Instrument swab for cleaning

Instrument Accessories - BRASS players

- ❏ Valve/slide oil
- ❏ Slide grease (cork grease also works well!)
- ❏ Cloth/rag for cleaning

Other Materials

- ❏ Tradition of Excellence method book - ***6th graders only***
- ❏ Sheet protectors (10-20)
- ❏ Pencils

Oak Grove Bands Accessory Order Form

Student Name_____ **Instrument**_____

Oboe/Bassoon

Jones Oboe Reeds	$15.00
Jones Bassoon Reeds	$15.00
Gower Bassoon Reeds	$18.00
Oboe Care Kit	$15.00
Bassoon Care Kit	$15.00

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

Vandoren Reeds(Box of 10)	$30.00
Fobes Clarinet Mouthpiece	$28.00
Bois Ligature	$20.00
Rovner Clarinet Ligature	$19.00
Silk Swab	$10.00
Clarinet Care Kit	$15.00
Clarinet Gig Stand	$10.00
Reed Guard	$3.00
Mouthpiece Patches(2)	$3.00
Cork Grease	$1.00
Bass Clarinet Reeds(Box of 5)	$26.00
Bass Clarinet Reed Guard	$3.00
Contra Clarinet Reeds(Box of 5)	$51.00

Alto/Tenor/Bari Saxophones

Alto Vandoren Reeds(Box of 10)	$35.00
Tenor Vandoren Reeds(Box of 5)	$26.00
Alto C-Star Mouthpiece	$119.00
Tenor C-Star Mouthpiece	$139.00
Rovner Ligature	$16.00
Silk Swab	$10.00
Care Kit	$15.00
Alto Sax Gig Stand	$21.00
Reed Guard	$3.00
Mouthpiece Patches(2)	$3.00
Cork Grease	$1.00
Bari Sax Reeds(Box of 5)	$40.00

Flute

Silk Swab	$9.00
Care Kit	$15.00
Cleaning Rod	$4.00
Flute Gig Stand	$18.00
ProTec Case	$42.00
BoPep Thumb/Finger Rest Combo	$18.00

Trumpet/Horn

Valve/Rotor Oil	$6.00
Bach 3C Mouthpiece(Trumpet)	$34.00
Bach ## Mouthpiece(Horn)	$42.00
Trumpet Gig Stand(K&M)	$24.00
Trumpet Care Kit—Lacquer-$15.00 Silver-	$15.00
Tom Crown Straight Mute(Trumpet)	$38.00
HB Cup Mute	$29.00
Valve Guard (Trumpet)	$7.00
Valve Guard (Horn)	$8.00

Trombone/Euphonium/Tuba

Valve/Slide Oil	$4.00
Super Slick Slide Cream	$3.00
Bach 6 1/2al Mouthpiece	$48.00
Schilke 51D Mouthpiece	$53.00
Helleberg Tuba Mouthpiece	$65.00
Trombone Gig Stand	$19.00
Trombone Care Kit	$15.00
Tom Crown Straight Mute(T-bone)	$49.00
HB Cup Mute	$37.00

Percussion

Ask Band Director for stick/mallet/accessory prices.

All Instruments

Wire Music Stand-$15.00 Tuner/Metronome-$28.00 Method Book-$10.00

Quantity	Description (Reed Strength, etc.)	Cost
TOTAL	***(SALES TAX has already been included in price.)***	

All Prices include tax and delivery to the school.
Please make checks payable to:
The Band Company

Excused Absence Form
2017-2018

Please note that for an absence to be considered excused, notice must be given a week in advance AND the reason for the absence must be approved by the Band Director. Failure to meet either of the aforementioned criteria will result in an unexcused absence.

Student Name:_____ Date:_____

Performance/Event:_____

Date of performance/event:_____

Reason for absence:_____

_____

_____