

ATTENTION PARENTS AND STUDENTS: THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT DOCUMENT. PLEASE READ IT, DISCUSS IT, AND KEEP IT ON HAND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS AS WE PROGRESS THROUGH THE SCHOOL YEAR!!!

THE BAND HANDBOOK

Beginning Band/Intermediate Band

Welcome to the Johnson Middle School Band Program!!! I look forward to working with each of you through a very exciting and musical year. Our band program is highly respected in our area and we have the opportunity to continue this tradition of excellence.

This handbook was written for you so that the L. B. Johnson Band Program can work as efficiently as possible. It will enable you to conform to the organization while contributing to its success. In order for students and parents to be aware of the policies of our organization, you are asked to read and keep this handbook. **Please take the time to read all of the handbook!** Students and parents must sign the handbook contract to show that you have read and understand the included information.

Thank you for supporting our Band Program at L. B. Johnson Middle School. If you have any questions about the information contained in this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact us at 253-5019 or singletonary.laura@brevardschools.org or curran.veronica@brevardschools.org.

Laura Singletonary/Veronica Curran
Directors

EXPECTATIONS for CONDUCT:

- ◆ Students are expected to enter the band room in an orderly manner, and to be in their seats and quiet by the time the director begins class (approximately 3 min. after the tardy bell). Students are not to leave their seats without permission until they are dismissed.
- ◆ No gum, food or beverage of any kind is allowed in the band room.
- ◆ There is to be no talking during rehearsal. Students with questions should raise their hands.
- ◆ Do not distract others through inappropriate behavior. **Non-attentive or lazy behavior is not tolerated in class.**
- ◆ Respond with a positive attitude in rehearsal. Compliment others on a job well done. Encourage each other.
- ◆ Maintain correct posture and playing position.
- ◆ Have instrument or sticks/mallets, music, **pencil** (on music stand) and all accessories in class. Music should never be folded or wrinkled. Students are urged to mark their music when necessary, but in pencil only.
- ◆ Be in place, ready to respond on time for trips, rehearsals and performances.
- ◆ Students will play only the instruments assigned to them.
- ◆ The music office is off limits unless a teacher invites you in.
- ◆ Band lockers are a privilege. No items other than instruments and music are allowed in the bandroom or hall lockers. Such items will be removed from the locker and thrown away. Lockers will be checked by the directors and/or officers on a regular basis.

- ◆ All instruments must be in a locker when not in use.
- ◆ Students who do not make adequate progress may be transferred to a lower level band, or to another elective after parent notification. *Likewise, students who show outstanding progress and complete an audition in December may be moved to a higher band class placement. All “upward” moves are at the director’s discretion and are based on the needs of the ensemble.*

CONSEQUENCES:

Band class grades are graded largely on participation; therefore, all rule infractions will result in a point deduction from the daily participation percentage of the grade.

1st offense-- Warning/loss of participation points for that rehearsal. Writing assignment may be assigned

2nd offense-- Conference with student/loss of participation points for that rehearsal. Writing assignment may be assigned.

3rd offense-- Parent phone call or conference/loss of participation points for that rehearsal.

4th offense-- Referral to dean

5th offense-- Possible removal from the program.

REHEARSALS and PERFORMANCES:

All members are expected to be present at all activities. Because of the nature of a performing group, each player is a VITAL part of the whole. Thus, for the L.B. Johnson Band program to be successful, you **MUST** be at all rehearsals and **ALL** performances. If you miss a rehearsal or performance, your grade will be affected.

Rehearsals

Just prior to a concert performance, beginning band students will be required to participate in one after-school rehearsal in order to “fine-tune” the music and to combine classes for performance. Adequate notice of their times/locations will be given so that arrangements can be made. **ALL BEGINNING BAND STUDENTS MUST ATTEND THE REHEARSAL IN ORDER TO BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM AT THE CONCERT!** *Intermediate band will not have any outside-of-school rehearsals.*

Performances

Performances are an important part of any musical organization. We will have two main performances this year: the Winter and Spring concerts. Dates and specific information will be given to you as soon as it becomes available. Please schedule family events around these two important dates.

Performance Attendance Policy

ALL students are required to attend performances for 3 reasons: 1) It is part of the learning experience; 2) We need you!! We function as a unit. We are a team; 3) It is fun!! The performance is the reward you have earned for all those hours of rehearsal.

Absences from concerts are approved only in these cases: **Approved absences need to be in writing with a parent signature.*

1. Administratively excused absence from school on day of performance.
2. Unexpected illness before concert (doctor excused).
3. Family emergency.

Examples of unexcused absences from a performance:

1. Outside work.
2. No transportation or no uniform (there is always a way...we will work with you).
3. Late to a performance. (We'll get you on- stage for the time left.)

Any student who misses a performance (excused or unexcused) is expected to complete an additional assignment to make up this event for their grade. Please see the director for assignment details. Students who miss the performance and fail to complete the additional assignment will receive an "0" for their performance grade. This policy is very generous, as many directors just give students a "0" for missing a performance no matter what the reason. In reality, a student's contribution to a performance cannot be replaced in any way!!!!

GRADING CONTRACT:

Beginning Band and Intermediate Band students will be graded in the following four areas: participation, attendance at performances and rehearsals, playing and written tests and/or worksheets, and practice charts. During the first few weeks of class, beginning band students will be graded mainly on their written work and classroom participation, and as time progresses, more and more emphasis will be placed on performance skills and practice. Grading will be as follows:

Practice Charts – 12%

Tests – 25%

Participation – 38%

Rehearsals/Performance – 25%

Practice charts will not begin for beginning band students until the 4th or 5th week of school. They will be explained in detail at that time. Intermediate band students will begin practice charts on the second week of school (8/25).

HOME PRACTICE:

Home practice plays an important part in the musical growth of any musician. Furthermore, educational research has proven that a student's ability to perform on a musical instrument will improve at a rate directly proportional to the quantity of time and effort expended in practice. We therefore seek parental help in encouraging home practice and making a special effort to be aware of his/her practice habits. Your awareness will enable you to offer praise when praise is due. A completed, signed practice record should be turned in by the student each Monday (or first school day of the week) every week for a grade given by PARENTS according to the grade/time scale. If the student practice record is not turned in, the student will receive a ZERO. A signed report turned in on time will warrant at least some points even if the student has not practiced. In this way, responsibility is rewarded. Practice charts will only be accepted in the week that they are due. Students will not be allowed to turn in charts for several weeks in order to "catch up" on their grade (with a case of extended absence being an exception). **Students must practice an average of 20 minutes per day if they are to make progress.**

UNIFORMS:

Beginning band students are asked to wear the following for their concert performances:

Boys: black pants, dark shoes, black socks, long-sleeved white shirt with collar, colorful tie.

Girls: black skirt (at or below knees) or black pants, black shoes, white blouse/shirt.

NO JEANS OR TENNIS SHOES WILL BE ALLOWED AT A PERFORMANCE!

Band T-Shirt

A band t-shirt will be available for students to purchase. This t-shirt is not required for performance this year, but students may purchase one if they wish.

Students must dress appropriately at ALL performances...Groups that dress well, play well!!

BAND PARENT SUPPORT :

Band parents work each year as a support group for the students in the band department. This group does many great things throughout the year to ensure that the needs of the students are met. The group helps organize fund raising activities, which produce the money needed for various functions. They also produces the chaperones needed to accompany the students to concerts, festivals, competitions, All-State and other functions. Sign-up lists will be available at Johnson's Open House (at the beginning of the year) for you to volunteer **AND ARE INCLUDED IN THE BACK OF THIS PACKET!!!** ALL parents are encouraged to sign up for various volunteer activities or other contributions. WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!!!!

FUND RAISING:

Each year the music students take part in fund raisers. It is important that each student do his/her or her best at raising money for the music program (the money is used to help purchase supplies, music and transportation beyond what is provided by the county). Each student is expected to help the band program raise approximately \$50.00 for his or her participation in the program. This money may be raised through participation in our organized fundraisers or through donations to the program.

The Following Should Be Kept in Mind

1. DO NOT SELL DOOR TO DOOR.
2. Sell to friends and relatives.
3. Parents may sell at work if it is permitted where they work.

Keeping the above items in mind, students should do well.

Our first fund raiser is tentatively scheduled for October, 2008. Please keep this in mind so we may be successful in this first fund raiser!!

FEES:

Instrument Rental: All students using school-owned instruments (low reeds, French horn, baritone, tuba, bassoon) must rent them for \$50.00 for the entire school-year (\$25 per semester). This fee is non-refundable. A contract must be signed claiming responsibility for repair work other than normal wear. Parents are responsible for damage caused by abuse or neglect. Payment is due the first week unless other arrangements are made. Checks must be made out to Johnson Middle School.

Percussion Usage: All **INTERMEDIATE BAND** percussionists using school owned equipment must pay \$25.00 for the year to cover repair and replacement cost. This fee is non-refundable. Parents are responsible for damage caused by abuse or neglect. Payment is due the first week unless other arrangements are made.



INSTRUMENT STORAGE:

During the school day, all instruments must remain in the band room designated storage areas. All latches on instrument cases must be secured. Because of the number of music students and lack of adequate space, **NAME TAGS** of the luggage variety must be attached to your instrument at all times. No books, jackets, lunch boxes, or any other personal item of any kind will be stored in the storage area. Failure to follow these instructions will result in your instrument storage privileges being revoked. Students who use a hallway locker will be provided a combination lock for their use. Students are responsible for this lock, and a \$5 fee will be assessed for students who do not turn in their lock at the end of the year. Students using inside lockers may use a combination lock if they wish. **ALL STUDENTS MUST USE JOHNSON BAND LOCKS...NO PERSONAL LOCKS OR PE LOCKS ARE ALLOWED!** See Mrs. Singletary or Mrs. Curran if you have questions.

INSTRUMENTS AND MOUTHPIECES:

A good instrument can be played well in tune without unreasonable effort, has a good tone quality and is well constructed for fewer repair problems. Instruments that lack these things are worthless at any price! Not only will the student have problems, he/she will cause serious problems with the entire band if his/her instrument is inadequate. A good mouthpiece is consistent in quality and size, and has dimensions that make good tone production and intonation easier. The mouthpiece is where the sound begins. It is thus the most important part of any instrument. In an effort to cut costs, most instrument makers put cheap \$5 mouthpieces on their \$400+ instruments! No professional player would play on the mouthpiece that came with his or her instrument.

All second-year players should consider “stepping up” to a more advanced model instrument and/or getting a more advanced mouthpiece. The better instruments/mouthpieces are easier to play with a beautiful tone, and generally help you to advance your musicianship. Keep in mind...you will be in marching band when you reach Eau Gallie High School, so it is a good idea to keep your first instrument as a “marching horn” so that you do not have to take your nice instrument into the weather!

INSTRUMENT CARE:

FLUTES

Flutes require little maintenance other than wiping out the excess moisture with a cloth on the cleaning rod, and wiping the body of the flute with a soft, lint-free cloth to remove fingerprints. Silver flutes may be polished with a jeweler's polishing cloth that is meant for use on silver. **Do not use liquid or paste type polish.** Do not use water on any part of the flute except the head joint (mouthpiece section), and do not use any type of oil or grease. Do not attempt to adjust any of the adjustment screws. If the flute will not go together easily, try cleaning the head and foot joints where they go into the body with a piece of clean, white paper (notebook or typing paper). If this does not help, the joint is probably bent and should be repaired by a quality repairman. Do not put anything in the case that will press against the flute when the case is closed! Many flutes are damaged when students put a folded polishing cloth over the flute before closing the case. Always leave the flute in the case, with the latches secured, when the flute is left unattended. *Music stands are not for holding flutes!*

CLARINETS, SAXOPHONES, and DOUBLE REEDS

Water is the enemy of woodwind instruments. Use the swab to remove moisture from the bore (inside of

instrument) or from the bassoon bocal after playing. Keep the mouthpiece clean by using mild soap, warm (not hot) water and a proper mouthpiece brush at least once a week. **Always** remove the reed from the mouthpiece when you are finished playing and keep the reed in a proper reed keeper. All corks should be greased with cork grease when they are new. Never use key oil! If your keys stick, take the instrument to the repair shop. Wooden clarinets or oboes should have the bore of the instrument oiled occasionally with a few drops of bore oil on a cloth swab. Have a professional oil the bore the first time to make sure it is done correctly! Do not put books or heavy cloths in the case that will put pressure on the keys when the case is closed. Do not leave wooden clarinets, oboes, or bassoons where they will suffer extreme heat or cold, as the wood may crack.

BRASS INSTRUMENTS

Brass instruments (except French Horn) should be kept clean by flushing them with mild liquid detergent and water at least once a month. This is known as “giving your horn a bath”. Remove all slides and valves, put your instrument in a bathtub-full of warm, soapy water. Use the small brushes that came with your instrument (called “snakes”) to clean the tubing on your instrument. After flushing, all slides should be greased with tuning slide grease. The valves on trumpets, baritones and tubas should be wiped with a paper towel, oiled with valve oil and replaced. French horns have rotary valves which should never be removed except by a repairman. Valve oil can be used by pulling a valve slide and putting a few drops of oil down the slides. The bearings of French horn valves should be oiled with a light oil, such as 3 in 1. To do this, you must unscrew the valve caps and place a drop of oil on each of the bearings. Keeping the valve bearings of a French horn oiled will prevent broken valve strings, a common repair problem. Move all tuning slides and valve caps often, and clean and grease them if they get tough to move. Stuck slides on school instruments are the most common repair problem! Trombone slides should be wiped with a soft, lint-free cloth and re-oiled. If slide cream is used, apply a very thin coat, spray the slide with water, and work the slide several times.

**SEE THE DIRECTOR OR A QUALIFIED REPAIR PERSON
FOR ALL INSTRUMENT REPAIR PROBLEMS.**

Sometimes you can make the problem worse by trying to “do-it-yourself!”

