

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

Symphonic 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 singletary.laura@brevardschools.org or curran.veronica@brevardschools.org.

Laura Singletary/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 sectionals, rehearsals and, most importantly, **ALL** performances. If you miss a rehearsal, sectional, or performance, your grade will be affected.

REHEARSALS:

Normal weekly rehearsal schedule for Johnson Band Students:

Mondays: 8:15-9:10 a.m. Woodwinds EVERY WEEK

Tuesdays: 8:15-9:10 a.m. Brass EVERY WEEK

Thursdays: 8:15-9:10 a.m. Percussion EVERY WEEK

This schedule will begin in the third week of school (the week of September 1) and will continue for the rest of the year. There will be no rehearsal on school holidays (such as Labor Day) and no make-up rehearsal will be required. Additional rehearsals will be needed in January and February to prepare for Band Festival, and adequate notice of these additional days/times will be given.

STUDENTS MUST ATTEND ALL REHEARSALS FOR THE ENSEMBLE TO GROW AND IMPROVE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN TO PLAY IN TUNE AND BALANCE WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PRESENT!! THUS, LITTLE TOLERANCE WILL BE SHOWN TO STUDENTS WHO MISS REHEARSAL. PLEASE MAKE A REAL EFFORT TO SCHEDULE DOCTOR’S APPOINTMENTS, ETC., ON OTHER DAYS. ALSO, REMEMBER...YOU ARE RECEIVING A GRADE FOR EACH BAND REHEARSAL YOU ATTEND. MISSING BAND REHEARSAL, EVEN FOR ACADEMIC EXTRA HELP, WILL LOWER YOUR BAND GRADE. TRY TO GET WITH YOUR TEACHER AND FIND A TIME TO GET EXTRA ACADEMIC HELP ON ANOTHER DAY!

ANY STUDENT WHO MISSES A REHEARSAL UNEXCUSED MAY BE ALLOWED BY THE DIRECTOR (AT HER DISCRETION) TO MAKE UP THE REHEARSAL BY ATTENDING ANOTHER GROUP’S REHEARSAL AND PRACTICING WITH THEM. THIS IS ONLY FAIR SINCE THE OTHER STUDENTS “PUT IN THE TIME”!!! STUDENTS WHO MISS REHEARSALS ON A REGULAR BASIS (EXCUSED OR UNEXCUSED) WILL BE MOVED OUT OF SYMPHONIC BAND.

Excused absences from rehearsal include the following:

1. Excused absence from the entire school day. Students who attend a portion of the school day will not be excused

from rehearsal due to illness except in extreme situations.

2. Approved conflict with another school/community event.

Examples of UN-Excused absences include the following:

1. "I wasn't feeling well when I woke up, so I slept in to get to feeling better."
2. "I had to make up a test." Do this on another day/time. Use after-school hours to schedule this extra help. TALK WITH YOUR TEACHERS TO FIND ALTERNATIVE DAYS/TIMES TO MAKE UP WORK. Band rehearsal is a grade just like the test you are making up...

NOTE: IT IS *MANDATORY* THAT YOU ATTEND. STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND REHEARSAL WILL BE DROPPED FROM SYMPHONIC BAND.

*****ARRIVE FOR REHEARSAL AT 8:10 a.m. To be on-time is to be late.*****

PERFORMANCES: Performances are an important part of any musical organization. We will have MANY performances this year. Dates and specific information will be given to you as it becomes available. Please schedule family events around these important dates. One reason students become involved in music is the opportunity to perform. In fact, part of the learning experience in music is to develop proper stage presence and poise in a performance situation.

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).
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!!!!

CONFLICTS WITH BAND: The band director believes that students should be able to participate in many school activities. However, **conflicts between band and other activities or events are the responsibility of the student.** Rehearsal and performance schedules are normally given out in advance, and students must approach the director with conflicting activities as soon as they know there is a potential conflict (at least two weeks in advance). It is the policy of the band to assist students when conflicts occur, but students should not expect excused absences for conflicts automatically. All conflicts in regard to performances must be worked out in favor of the student's responsibility to the band.

GRADING CONTRACT:

Symphonic Band

Symphonic Band students will be graded in the following five areas: participation, attendance at performances and rehearsals, playing and written tests and/or worksheets, practice charts, and extra effort. Grading will be as follows:

Practice Charts – 11%
Tests – 25%
Participation – 34%
Rehearsals/Performances – 25%
Extra Effort – 5%

EXTRA EFFORT: Students who participate in Symphonic Band must exhibit “extra effort” towards increasing their musicianship in order to receive their extra effort points in band class. The “extra effort” category may be fulfilled by any of the following listed below:

1. Taking private lessons for at least half of a nine-weeks period
2. Participation in a second band class during the school day at J.M.S.
3. Participation in any of the following activities: All-State Band Auditions (1st 9 weeks), All-County Band Auditions (2nd 9 weeks), All-County Band (3rd 9 weeks), Solo and Ensemble Festival (3rd 9 weeks).
4. Writing a three-page report (per 9 weeks) about a musical event, composer, or idea. Topic must be approved by Ms. Curran/Mrs. Singletary and must be written in the student’s own handwriting.
5. Playing another instrument than your primary instrument in Symphonic Band as needed by Ms. Curran/Mrs. Singletary
6. Any action, event, or deed deemed worthy by Ms. Curran//Mrs. Singletary
7. Any valid idea created by YOU that will further your musical development!!

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. The student should turn in a completed, signed practice record 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 at all, 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 30 minutes per day if they are to make progress. PLEASE NOTE: Practice charts will begin the 2nd full week of school (8/25) and will continue throughout the school year.

UNIFORMS: Symphonic Band students are asked to wear the following for concert performances:

Boys: black pants, dark shoes, black socks, TUXEDO shirt, and a bowtie/cummerbund provided by the band.

Girls: black skirt provided by the band, black shoes, TUXEDO shirt, and a bowtie/cummerbund provided by the band
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<i>*Tuxedo shirts will be available for purchase at the beginning of the school year.</i>

All students are required to have the following “alternate” uniform for less-formal performances (including our performance at high school football games):

All students: Johnson Band T-shirt, blue jeans (standard color and length with NO OTHER COLORS ON

THE JEANS)...NO SHORTS!, tennis shoes (any type)...NO SANDALS. No jewelry, please.

**Johnson band T-shirts will be available for purchase at beginning of school year.*

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

****Students dressed improperly will not be allowed to perform with the ensemble. This absence will count as an unexcused absence from the performance. ****

There will be a \$3 dry-cleaning fee for all Symphonic Band students to cover the costs of dry-cleaning the bowties/cummerbunds at the end of the year.

BAND PARENT SUPPORT : Band parents work each year as a support group for the students in the band program. 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 produce the chaperones needed to accompany the students to festivals, competitions, All-State and other functions. Sign up sheets and more information will be available at Johnson's Open House at the beginning of the school year as IN THE BACK OF THIS PACKET!! ALL parents are encouraged to attend and 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 their 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 endeavor!

FEES:

Instrument Rental: School owned instruments may be rented for \$50.00 for the entire school -year. 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.

Percussion Usage: All 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.

Folders: All students will purchase their folder for Symphonic Band. Once purchased, they will own the folder and be able to keep it at the end of the year. The cost for the folder is \$12.00.

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 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 on a French horn 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 circular 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-lubricated. 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!”

OFFICERS:

The following officer positions will be available to students in the Symphonic Band:

➤ **Band Captain**

- Acts as student representative of the band department for all necessary functions.
- Coordinates all student officers.
- Helps enforce all rules and maintain order.
- Is responsible for the group at pep-band activities.
- Is appointed by the Director after a recommendation vote by the Symphonic Band.

➤ **Secretary(ies)**

- Assist with attendance
- Maintain and organizes all practice charts for the band program
- Assist the director with all paperwork.
- Is appointed by the director following consideration of applications.

➤ **Librarian(s)**

- Files music and maintains the school music library.
- Keeps a record of all music.
- Assists the director in passing out and collecting all music, books, etc.
- Is appointed by the director following consideration of applications.

➤ **Uniform Officer**

- Will assist the band parents in charge of uniforms before and after each performance.
- Maintains uniform inventory and keeps student records concert uniforms.
- Is appointed by the director following consideration of applications

Section Leaders :

Section leaders must be the best, most experienced players in their section and must be able to conduct

music rehearsals in an efficient, friendly manner. The student who is first chair in the section will act as section leader. Section leaders are responsible for helping their section be organized in attending all rehearsals, having all equipment and music, and are responsible for calling extra sectional rehearsals (each must be approved by the Director in advance) if they are necessary to perform the music at a top-notch level. Section leaders will assist students in their section who need extra help with the music, and will lead their section in rehearsal on days when Ms. Curran//Mrs. Singletary are absent during class. Any student who does not lead in an effective manner in this position will be removed regardless of their chair placement.