

Hightower Trail Middle School Band



2011-2012 8th Grade Band Handbook

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Hightower Trail Middle School Band

Dear HTMS Band Families,

We welcome you to the 2011-12 Hightower Trail Middle School Band Program. We are delighted that you and your child have chosen to participate in this year's program. Music can be enjoyed by everyone, and playing an instrument is a skill that can last a lifetime. Statistics have proven over and over again that students who participate in music programs are among the academically elite in their schools. Their adult lives are filled with successes, often attributed to the skills gained through the band experience: self-discipline, work ethic, attention to detail, teamwork, and confidence. Band membership can provide this foundation for your child during what can be an awkward growing time in middle school and high school.

Playing an instrument allows a "hands on" experience not found in the other classrooms in the school. Certainly, there are many excellent opportunities in school for children to exercise their imagination, but the band allows for the students to actually be *inside* of the art they are creating. And, rather than simply exercising their thumbs while viewing action on a video screen, the students interact with the entire atmosphere in which they sit - sight, sound, touch. They **are** the action and learn to control what they do, not merely watch it as it goes by. Being in a music class also helps access creativity that might otherwise go undeveloped. The universal language of music provides a wonderful vehicle for this personal growth.

For parents, being involved is a bonus. Research points to the importance of supporting children in the positive activities they become a part of. We hope you will enhance your child's music education by becoming involved with the band this year. There are many ways you can help us as a band parent, including, but not limited to, chaperoning, uniform fitting and fundraiser working. This year, the District Honor Band will be held at HTMS and we will need help with that, too.

This handbook is your reference to the activities planned for the Band Program this year. It also outlines Program policies and procedures. Please review this handbook with your child and refer to it as necessary throughout the school year.

We encourage you to refer to the **band website** often for up-to-date information:

www.htmsband.org

You may also **e-mail** us with any questions you may have:

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We will be happy to assist you in any way. We are looking forward to another rewarding year with your family as a part of our program!

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide each band family with an understanding of the policies and procedures that govern the Hightower Trail Middle School Band Program. These guidelines exist to ensure consistent rules are applied to each and every student in all aspects of the Band Program.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Hightower Trail Middle School Band Program to introduce students to the fundamentals of instrumental music performance, so that they may become lifelong participants. It is also our mission to prepare students for membership in the Pope High School Band. Once students master fundamentals to a competent level in each grade, we then pursue sincere and serious music-making for outstanding performances. The mission of the band program aligns with the school's mission statement; particularly Belief Statements #2, #3, and #5 (see HTMS Student Handbook).

Instructional Emphasis

Our School Improvement Plan's student achievement goal for 2011-12 is: "All students will meet standards, and more students will exceed standards on nationally-normed and state tests."

Personal Instruments

Personal Instruments are defined as instruments that belong to or are rented by an individual student's family from a community music store or private business. These instruments are not owned or insured by Hightower Trail Middle School, the Cobb County School District, or the State of Georgia. The student (and family) is responsible for maintaining the instrument in working order (see p. 3 "Participation") with the proper accessories (see p. 4 "Class Materials"). The band directors will recommend repairs (when needed) and specific quality accessories as the student progresses through the program.

School Instruments

School Instruments are defined as instruments which belong to Hightower Trail Middle School. These typically include larger instruments: bassoons, bass clarinets, tenor and baritone saxophones, French horns, euphoniums, tubas, etc. The school bears the responsibility of repair costs on these instruments. However, students are contractually obligated to treat them with special care so that needless and expensive repairs do not have to be made. Future students must be able to use these instruments. Obvious damage to school instruments will be considered vandalism and will be dealt with in the manner outlined by Cobb County Schools in the HTMS Student Handbook. To ease transportation and increase home practice, it would help your child if you could rent one of these instruments to keep at home.

Grading System

<u>8th Grade</u>	
Class Participation	40%
Playing Tests	35%
Music Theory	15%
Classroom Etiquette	10%

Participation

Each student is required to have ALL class materials for class each day (see p. 5). Each day a student is missing materials, 20 points are deducted from their weekly participation grade (100 points per week). Students with instruments in the repair shop should bring a signed note. **ALWAYS ASK FOR A LOANER WHILE YOUR INSTRUMENT IS BEING REPAIRED.** Generally, rental programs provide this service.

Playing Tests

Each student will be required to play lines from their book and concert music for a grade every 9-weeks. 7th and 8th graders also perform a Scale Test each 9-weeks. Students are always encouraged to “retake” any test on which they do not show sufficient mastery or improvement. Scale Test retakes are done before and after school, not during class.

Music Theory

Written assignments in the Standard of Excellence book count in this category. 7th and 8th graders will complete periodic theory assignments as appropriate to the musical study of their class. Essential Questions apply to this category.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to exhibit the following qualities on a consistent daily basis, including concerts:

Effort:	proper posture, active listening, sincere attempt to demonstrate mastery.
Responsibility:	turns in items on time, a positive contributor to classroom environment.
Attitude:	pleasant demeanor, receptive to instruction, falls in line with class activities, obeys adults.

Class Materials

*Students are expected to have all materials in class each day for their **Participation grade**.*

1. **Band Instrument** *Make sure the store's repair shop provides loaner instruments for students to use in band class.
2. **Required Text** 8th: *Standard of Excellence - ENHANCED*, Book 2 (blue)
3. **Music Binder** 7th & 8th: **1 inch black hard cover** binder with pockets.
4. **Pencil** Keep in your case, binder, or locker (mechanical is best).
5. **Instrument-Specific Supplies:** (equivalents are fine)
 - Flute: Tuning rod (specific to your make & model), cotton cleaning swab or bandana.
 - Oboe: 3 reeds at all times (Jones medium-soft, or equivalent), reed case, small canister (prescription bottle) for reed soaking, weighted silk swab, cork grease.
 - Bassoon: 3 reeds at all times (Jones medium-soft, or equivalent), reed case, small canister (prescription bottle) for reed soaking, weighted silk swabs (for boot joint and wing joint), bocal brush (or long pipe cleaners), cork grease.
 - All Clarinets: 4 reeds in a reed case at all times (Vandoren Traditional: strength 2 ½ for 6th grade, strength 3 for 7th grade, strength 3 ½ for 8th grade), stock mouthpiece and ligature are fine until 8th grade (see directors for suggested step-ups), weighted silk swab, cork grease.
 - All Saxophones: 4 reeds in a reed case at all times (Vandoren Traditional: strength 2 ½ for 6th grade, strength 3 for 7th & 8th grade), stock mouthpiece and ligature are fine until 8th grade (see directors for suggested step-ups), neck strap, weighted silk swab, cork grease.
 - Trumpet: Valve oil, tuning slide grease, mouthpiece brush, cleaning cloth.
Bach 5C mouthpiece or equivalent is best.
 - French Horn: Valve oil, tuning slide grease, mouthpiece brush.
Schilke 30 mouthpiece or equivalent is best.
 - Trombone: Slide lubricant, tuning slide grease, mouthpiece brush, cleaning cloth.
Bach 6 ½ AL mouthpiece or equivalent is best.
 - Euphonium & Tuba: Valve oil, tuning slide grease, mouthpiece brush.
For euphonium, a Bach 6 ½ AL mouthpiece or equivalent is best.
For tuba, a Bach 24 AW mouthpiece or equivalent is best.
 - Percussion: 6th: Beginner Kit: bell kit with bell mallets & 8-inch practice pad with Vic Firth SD1 General concert snare sticks (or equivalents).
7th & 8th: Stick bag with the following (or equivalents):
 1. Vic Firth SD1 General concert snare sticks.
 2. Vic Firth M1 yarn mallets.
 3. Vic Firth T1 General timpani mallets.

Band Program Behavior Management Plan

All school-wide rules and expectations are in effect in the music classrooms and on any trip the students may take with the Hightower Trail Middle School Band.

Each music classroom exists to educate each and every child in the fundamentals of music. For all students to receive such an education, the following expectations will set the classroom climate:

1. LISTEN.
2. Follow directions.
3. Show respect.
4. Be prepared.
5. Stay on task.

Behavior Log

Students begin each 9-weeks with no offenses and an "S" in conduct.

<i>Offense</i>	<i>Conduct Grade</i>	<i>Consequence</i>
1	S	Student behavior documented in Behavior Log
2	S	Student behavior documented in Behavior Log Parent called
3	N	Student behavior documented in Behavior Log Parent called Appropriate consequence determined
4	U	Student behavior documented in Behavior Log Parent called Student behavior turned over to the appropriate administrator

Concert Attendance

Students are expected to attend their concerts. A band is a performing group which can only develop to its fullest potential when each member is fulfilling his/her role completely. Absences not only affect the learning of one student, who misses the summative assessment, but also the learning of the other band students. Concert dates and times are published in this handbook, on the Band Website (www.htmsband.org), and in concert letters that go out approximately two weeks before each concert event.

Grading

Concert attendance counts toward the Playing Test portion of your grade. If you attend the concert, wearing the appropriate attire, and demonstrating proper behavior, you will receive a 100 grade in the Playing Test category. If you are absent from the concert (whether due to illness, sports conflicts, etc.), you must schedule a make-up with the directors. Family emergencies are the only exception.

How to handle conflicts

Students should be encouraged to participate in a variety of activities at this age, and sometimes conflicts will occur. Use the following guidelines to resolve any conflicts:

1. Copy the Band Calendar (included in this handbook) into your family calendar.
2. Notify the directors of any school conflicts, so that the directors may make arrangements with the sponsor.

Make-Up Policy

Missing a concert is the same as missing an exam or summary project in another class, and therefore requires a make-up performance. While students attending the concert receive an automatic 100 grade, make-ups will be graded based on the quality of the performance. Students should prepare to play all concert selections in their entirety.

It is up to the student to schedule a time before or after school with the directors. If the student misses their make-up time, they will receive a zero. If a student cannot come before or after school, they may submit a VHS or DVD recording of themselves.

Family Emergencies

To be excused from a make-up performance, we must receive written notice of the emergency upon your child's return to school. This may be written by another parent or a caregiver if you are unavailable during the time of crisis.

Concert Attire

Girls:

Band polo shirt

Black dress slacks
(no skirts, slit legs, vinyl, jeans, sequins).
Black belt, if you wear one.
Black hose or socks, if you wear them.
Black dress shoes.

Boys:

Band polo shirt

White undershirt.
Black dress pants.
Black belt, if you wear one.
Black socks.
Black dress shoes.

Some Do-Not's:

No collarless shirts.
No jeans, not even black.
No leather or vinyl looking pants.
No navy blue pants.
No brown belts.
No white shoes or socks.
No sneakers or boots.
No colors other than black and white.

Students who arrive at a concert without the proper clothing will be prohibited from performing and need to follow the concert make-up policy (see p. 6).

* We encourage you to address concert attire issues long before the day of a concert. We all work hard to prepare for public performances, and deserve to be presented in a manner worthy of public scrutiny.

Concert Etiquette

Our concerts are always a lot of fun and represent the fine efforts of our students during the preparation process. Due to the excitement these concerts bring, students can become overzealous in their audience participation. Please help them by reminding them what appropriate concert behavior is. The purpose of these concerts is to showcase the students' musical achievements, *not* to draw attention to performer or audience behavior.

Performer Etiquette:

- Do not talk or play out of turn; this is not different from class.
- Do not stand, wave, or draw attention to yourself.
- Keep an eye on the podium to get instructions.
- After you perform, stay and watch the other groups performing after you.

Audience Etiquette:

- When the lights go down, quickly get quiet.
- Silence any cell phones, pagers, etc.
- Do not enter the Theatre when the band is playing; wait until the selection is over, then enter quietly.
- Applaud for everyone, after every song – each group has worked equally hard.
- When you applaud, do not make unnecessarily loud noises.
- Stay for the entire concert.

Band Room Lockers

All students will be issued a locker in the band room. The combination locks are provided by school (replacement cost is \$5.35), and no personal locks are allowed. If a personal lock is placed on a band locker, the lock will be removed by the directors. Combinations will be distributed on stickers to place in your HTMS planner/agenda. Do not share the combination with anyone.

Band lockers are for storing band instruments, music binders, and band accessories only. Any non-band items found stored in a band locker will be removed by the directors.

Band Room Schedule

Morning practice time is available each day before school from **8:00-9:00 am**. The band room is also available most afternoons from **4:15-5:30 pm**. These are times for students to complete Pass-Offs with a director, get help on Solo & Ensemble music, All-State and Honor Band auditions, concert music, Scale Tests, or practice individually or with friends. Only students who are interested in **practicing** should come to these sessions. Homework and socializing can be done in other places. Students who abuse this privilege will be prohibited from attending future sessions.

Private Lessons

We encourage every student – 6th, 7th, and 8th grade – to take private instruction from an accomplished musician. Private lessons make the most of your band investment, allowing for individual attention and a specialist's advice. Furthermore, lessons typically raise your audition scores for Honor Band and All-State; it is rare for students to make these groups without taking private lessons. As an added benefit, private lessons help the band improve. As the saying goes, "Make the *individual* better, and the band will get better."

Contact the directors before choosing a private lesson teacher. We know the area very well and can help you with your selection. The Pope Conservatory, a booster-organized collection of private instructors teaching out of the Pope HS Band Room, is always an excellent choice. Contact the Pope Band Parents Association (PBPA) at www.popeband.org for more information.

Purchasing Equipment

Likewise, contact the directors before upgrading or purchasing additional equipment for your instrument. We frequently purchase instruments for the band, and can certainly point you toward quality products.

Ingredients for Success in Band:

- Make sure your child's instrument is in good working condition.
- Provide a quiet place to practice.
- Schedule a consistent, daily practice time.
- Remain nearby during practice times as much as possible.
- Praise your child's efforts and accomplishments.
- Encourage your child to play for family and friends.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music including live concerts and recitals.
- Allow your child to play many types of music.
- Help your child build a personal music library.
- Decide that you and your child have made a commitment to band and stick to it.
Most parents have their children agree to participate through 9th grade.

If Your Child Gets Frustrated...

- Discuss the situation with your child and determine specifically why he/she is frustrated.
- Talk with the band directors to see what suggestions they have.
- Encourage your child to stay in band for an agreed period of time.
Most parents have their children agree to participate through 9th grade.
- Offer increased encouragement and support.

If, after consultation with the band directors, the determination is made to drop band, the following HTMS Music Department Drop Procedure must be followed:

1. A parent note must be submitted to the band directors.
2. The parent note must be submitted during the first 3 days of the school year. Drops at the end of each 9-weeks are no longer permitted.
3. Once the parent note is received, a director/parent/student conference must be held to discuss the situation.
4. If, after the conference, the decision is made to drop band, the band directors will notify the appropriate administrator of the schedule change.

HTMS 8th Grade Band Calendar 2011-2012

August

Wed 17 Bring Instruments (7th & 8th grades) class

September

Thurs 1 Sign-up / fees deadline: Solo & Ensemble, District Honor Band/All-State Band Audition class
 Fri 23 Sign-up deadline: 8th Grade Band Game Night class
 Tues 27 8th Grade Band Rehearsal Night @ Pope 4:30-7pm HTMS/Pope
 Fri 30 8th Grade Band Game Night @ Pope 5:30-end Pope Band Rm

October

Wed 12 Band Fundraiser Kickoff class
Thurs 13 8th Grade Band & Orchestra Concert report 6:30pm HTMS Theater
 Wed 19 Band Fundraiser orders / money deadline 8-9am HTMS Band Rm

November

Sat 12 Solo & Ensemble Festival times tba Palmer MS
 Week of 14 Band Fundraiser Pickup 12-7pm HTMS Band Rm

December

Sat 3 District Honor Band/All-State Audition times tba Dodgen MS
 *Thurs-Sat 8-10 UGA MidFest Trip (for those interested) sched. tba UGA – Athens
Mon 12 8-2 Band with Pope Band Concert report 6:30pm HTMS Theater
 Week of 19 Band Fundraiser Prize Day class

January

Sat 7 All-State Band - State Level Audition times tba Perry MS (Perry, GA)

February

Fri-Sun 10-12 District Honor Band Weekend times tba **HTMS**

March

Thurs-Sat 1-3 All-State Band Weekend Savannah, GA
Mon-Wed 12-14 8th Grade Band LGPE (buses provided) day/time tba McEachern HS

April

Thurs 12 HTMS Night of the Arts (small ensembles) 6-9pm HTMS Band Rm

May

Fri 4 Jazz Band Performance Evaluation time tba Walton HS
 Sat 5 8th Jazz Band at Taste of East Cobb (tentative) time tba tba
Tues 15 8th Grade Band & Orchestra Concert report 6:30pm HTMS Theater