

Hard Work ~ High Expectations ~ Memorable Results

North Bethesda Middle School
Instrumental Music Handbook

August 27, 2008

Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to the start of the 2008-2009 school year! I hope that everyone had a great summer. We are going to have a fantastic year. Have pride in your ensemble, work hard, make music, and have fun. Being part of a performing ensemble is a HUGE responsibility. It involves self-discipline, commitment, and concern for others while providing a rewarding and exciting experience for all those involved.

I feel that it is extremely important that all students and parents who are involved in the band or orchestra program are aware of the ensemble goals and expectations. This handbook has been developed for the members of the North Bethesda Instrumental Music Department and their parents with the intent of communicating the standards, policies, and expectations of the Instrumental Music Department.

I hope this handbook serves to answer any questions you may have about the Instrumental Music program. Thank you for encouraging your child to study music. Your support is invaluable. Please do not hesitate to phone/email if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. I can be reached at North Bethesda Middle School 301.571.3883 or email monica_l_hepburn@mcpsmd.org. Finally, please read this handbook carefully, sign and date the last page, and have your child return it to school no later than Monday, September 1st.

I am looking forward to a productive and fun year of musical growth!!!!!!!

Musically,

Monica L. Hepburn
Director of Instrumental Music

Instrumental Music Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Follow classroom expectations.
2. Meet individual responsibilities for care and maintenance of his or her musical instrument.
3. Follow concert performance procedures.
4. Meet performance obligations as indicated on the school's comprehensive instrumental music calendar.
5. Demonstrate basic competencies of instrumental performance in the areas of tone production, intonation, articulation, range and memorized scales.
6. Sight read appropriate MENC grade level music.

Band & Orchestra Expectations

1. Always do the best that you can do!
2. Show respect for each other and your director.
3. All school rules found in the student/parent handbook apply, even when the ensemble is off campus.
4. Arrive to class on time. Consequences for tardiness: **1st Tardy = Verbal Warning from teacher, 2nd Tardy = Lunch Detention**
5. Be prepared for class with: Instrument in working order, music, method book, and a pencil.
6. No food, gum (I am a world class gum spotter!!! Don't try to fool me!!!) or drink is allowed in the music room or practice room. **Consequences: 1st Offense = lunch detention, 2nd Offense = 1 hour after school detention.**
7. Warm-up carefully, only after being seated and prepared for class.
8. Respect all equipment, music and instruments including school equipment. **DO NOT** leave your instrument sitting on the floor.
9. Listen carefully to his or her playing in relation to the group, making necessary corrections.
10. Ask the director questions he or she may have about the music by **RAISING YOUR HAND**. Any other talking, noise making, or playing out of turn during the rehearsal is unacceptable and **NOT TOLLERATED!**
11. At the end of every rehearsal, all music folders, and instruments **MUST** be put in their proper designated storage space. All percussion equipment must be returned to the percussion cabinet. Please **DO NOT** leave instruments or schoolbooks around the rehearsal room.
12. Since every performance is based on a group effort, every member of the **"TEAM"** is vitally important to each rehearsal or performance. It is the expectation that when you select band/orchestra you are committing to a **FULL YEAR** of music instruction.

Grading Policy

Student's grades will be based on the following, by demonstrating performance competency and continuous growth in the following areas:

Note Accuracy – the ability to control the instrument, relating to expanding range, endurance, finger dexterity and flexibility.

Rhythmical Accuracy – the ability to count and clap meter, correctly placing sounds in a time continuum.

Ensemble Skills – the ability to blend one's individual sound with a section and entire group. Also included is the ability to follow the conducting techniques of the director.

Sight-reading – the ability to read and perform the appropriate MENC grade level music.

Dynamics – the ability to interpret different types of music responding to musical directions of dynamics

Articulations / Bowing – the ability to play and interpret different types of music, responding to musical directions of articulation / bowing.

Technical Studies – the ability to demonstrate basic competencies of instrumental performance in the areas of memorized scales, intonation, range, and tone production.

Posture – The ability to sit correctly, while paying attention to proper playing position.

Students are required to know selected major scale passages assigned during rehearsals and all assigned music. Students should practice everyday. A little practice every day is more effective than a lot of practice over the weekend. Take your instrument home after school!!!!!!!!!!!! ☺

Learning Skills Participation

Learning Skills will be divided into two categories:

1. Participation- asking questions, giving ideas, using feedback, and engaging in learning.
2. Assignment Completion – Completing homework and class work.

Learning Skills Codes will appear on the student progress report/report card as:

C = Consistently

O = Often

S = Sometimes

R = Rarely

NI = Not enough information

In this classroom you must have your instrument in working order, music, method book, and pencil to be considered PARTICIPATING. Lacking one or more of the items listed above will result in NOT PARTICIPATING. Expect the director to ask you daily to see your pencil, music, and method book.

Instrument and Music Care

Music Folder/Sheet Music

1. Be sure your name is included in your music folder.
2. Use only a PENCIL to write on the music. Do not use any type of pen!
3. The folder and music must be kept in good condition. The student's sheet music and text book must be stored in their music folder. Replace or repair damaged folders to avoid damaging the music.

Equipment

1. Make sure your name and school is attached to or placed on your instrument case. This is critical in the event your instrument is lost, or in many cases left on the bus.
2. Keep your instrument in working condition. Periodically inspect your instrument and report any damage or maintenance needs.
3. Equipment is to be stored in its designated space. Do not leave instruments in the hallway. Small instruments may be stored in hall lockers.
4. Instruments need to be kept clean, both inside and out for sanitary reasons and for better playing response.
5. Percussionists are held responsible for keeping the percussion section in a neat and orderly manner.
6. Students and parents will be financially responsible for repairs on school owned instruments which are the result of misuse or neglect.

Private Lessons

I strongly encourage all parents to consider private lessons for their son/daughter. There is no better way to ensure progress on a musical instrument than private lessons coupled with home practice. Private lessons are a “one on one” teaching session with a professional musician who is very advanced on his/her instrument/

I can not stress enough the importance of private lessons. Many new students have expressed concerns about the difficulty of music - take private lessons and get a great head start on some solid practice techniques and methods for your instrument.

Concert Procedures

1. Concert Attendance Policy: Concerts are the culmination of many hours of hard work and serve to complete the learning process. Students are graded in relation to their accomplishment of course objectives. Students are required to participate in a limited number of special evening and weekend performances.
2. Because performances are part of the course objectives, **ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY**. Family vacations, sports events, lack of transportation etc. are not considered legitimate reasons for missing performances. Musical ensembles are a team effort. It is essential for every member of our team to be present. If, in a very rare circumstance you need to miss a performance for a wedding or other equally important family event, you **MUST** turn in a written excuse/email from a parent or guardian **ONE MONTH** prior to the performance.
3. Appropriate concert dress is mandatory. Only students who are dressed appropriately will be permitted to participate. The following is considered acceptable dress for public performance:
GENTLEMEN – BLACK DRESS PANTS, WHITE LONG SLEEVED DRESS SHIRT, TIE OF YOUR CHOICE, DARK DRESS SOCKS, DARK DRESS SHOES

LADIES – BLACK DRESS SHIRT/BLOUSE, BLACK PANTS OR KNEE LENGTH SKIRT, DARK STOCKINGS, DARK DRESS SHOES, OR ALL BLACK DRESS
4. Arrive 60 minutes before the concert start time.
5. A concert is a performance for family, friends, and the community; therefore, students are representing the school and should act and perform in a professional manner. **“CLASSROOM REHEARSAL PROCEDURES ARE TO BE FOLLOWED!!!!”**

NBMS PERFORMANCE CALENDAR 08 - 09

Performance	Date / Time	Location
Jr. & Sr. Honors Jazz Auditions	Monday, October 6 th 4-9pm	Frost Middle School
Junior All County Band and Orchestra Auditions	Tuesday, November 11 th 6-10 pm	Rockville High School
Junior All State Band and Orchestra Auditions	Saturday, November 15th	TBA
NBMS Winter Concert (Vocal & Instrumental)	Friday, December 12 th 7pm	Walter Johnson High School
All County Band & Orchestra Gala	Saturday, February 7 th 6:30 pm	BCC – High School
MCPS District II Ensemble Festival	Saturday, March 7 th 4-10 pm	Paint Branch High School
MCPS District II Solo Festival	Saturday, March 7 th 9-5 pm	Paint Branch High School
MCPS Orchestra Festival	April 1, 2009	Richard Montgomery High School
MCPS Band Festival	April 2, 2009	Blake High School
Music in the Parks “Busch Gardens”	Friday, May 15 th ALL DAY	Williamsburg, Virginia
North Bethesda Spring Concert	TBA	Walter Johnson High School

Please keep in mind that the above calendar is tentative. You will be notified of any changes as soon as they become known.

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North Bethesda Parent – Student Agreement

Please detach and return to Miss Hepburn by September 1st

I have read the handbook and understand all rules and policies of the North Bethesda Music Department. I understand that I must abide by the following policies in order to make music a successful musically enriching experience for all of those involved. I realize that if I do not meet these expectations it could be harmful to my own musical experience as well as others and may result in the lowering of my grade.

STUDENT NAME

CLASS

STUDENT SIGNATURE

PARENT SIGNATURE
