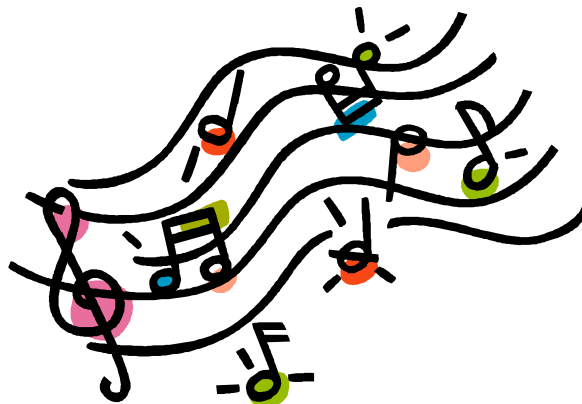


Hamilton Middle School

6TH GRADE BAND

HANDBOOK



2014-2015

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WELCOME

Dear 6th Grade Parents and Students,

Welcome to sixth grade instrumental music. Learning to play an instrument is a very exciting, challenging, and rewarding endeavor that lasts a lifetime. I am excited for another year of growing as musicians and performers! Though some things are different this year, together we will continue to develop the Hamilton instrumental music department.

Students will share many new and unique experiences. In the first few weeks, I will teach them to assemble their horn properly, play their horn (from achieving their first sound to eventually playing songs they know) and proper maintenance of their horn. As the school year progresses we also try to include some music theory, history, and styles.

As we learn about music and its performance, an ideal becomes familiar which can be described with one word. That word is teamwork. The band is made up of individuals striving for a common goal: to enjoy music together and play the best we can. Playing the best we can involves a lot of dedication and commitment in the class, as well as, time out of the class practicing. Parents, you play a critical role in this part of the class. Students may need your help in finding a practice area that is good for them and a practice time that is fairly consistent in their daily schedules. Your support in this area is vital. Sometimes a lack of practice outside of class can slow down student progress to the degree that one becomes discouraged. If I can help in any way with this area please contact me.

This handbook is designed to reinforce and clarify expectations and policies for members and their parents. In it you will find information that is useful to sixth grade band students and their parents. Of special note is the attendance policy on page 6 and the performance schedule on page 5. Please mark these required dates on your calendar now and plan to support your child at many events!

Please review all of the information in this Handbook, sign and date the signature sheet on page 7, and return just the signature sheet to the director.

We will continue doing everything we can to make the band program one of excellence that provides the students with a thorough music education as well as positive performance experiences.

Please never hesitate to call or e-mail me if you have a question or concern. My contact information is below.

Mr. Paul Connelly
Middle School: 269-751-4436 x437
E-mail: pconnell@hamiltonschools.us

I'm looking forward to a fantastic year!

Sincerely,

Mr. Paul Connelly
Instrumental & Vocal Music Director

Course Descriptions

Sixth grade band will focus on the basic fundamentals of how to physically play an instrument. Students will also learn about care and maintenances of their horns. Many notes and fingerings will be taught, as well as, rhythms, music terms, and symbols. Students will learn to read music and as a result be able to play different tunes and pieces. Attendance at all performances is mandatory.

Performance Attire

Concert dress, for sixth grade, is nice dress clothes. Please avoid wearing jeans, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or sneakers. The primary goal is to establish that concerts are events and celebrations where neat individual appearance is an important aspect of the presentation.

Rehearsal Expectations

The success of a band depends on the contributions of each band member. Good behavior, positive attitude and self-discipline are **essential** to producing a great band. If **you** are successful, the **band** is successful. Rehearsal Expectations are as follows:

- Students are expected to be in the room before the “bell rings,” either holding their instruments or on their way to get them. Tardiness will affect their rehearsal grades.
- Students will immediately assemble their instrument and quietly await instruction. Activity should be limited to soft warm-ups with long tones, scales, and possibly rehearsal of a technical musical passage if time permits.
- Stop any activity when the director steps to the podium area. Students shall strive to be attentive at all times.
- Mobile devices are NEVER allowed in band class.
 - There will be a box in the room for students to deposit mobile devices each day at the beginning of class. At the end of class, they may fish them out again. If a mobile device is found being used during class, it will be confiscated. The student will then need to see Mr. Kramer to get it back again.
- Students shall at all times strive to do their best work and perform to the utmost of their ability.
- Students have the right to work in a clean environment.
 - Many classes will be using the band room each day. Each person using the room is responsible for keeping it clean and as uncluttered as possible.
 - The band room and instrument storage room are not places to store personal items.
- No gum, food, or candy is allowed in rehearsal, though water bottles are encouraged!
 - Students should ask if they may have a cough drop before they put it in their mouths.
- A pencil is a requirement of this class. It is required that all students have a pencil in their band folder or instrument case at all times. Students should only use pencil (never pen!) to mark their scores.
- Students must demonstrate support of fellow band members at all times! This includes inside and outside of rehearsal. A good working relationship can be fostered only if there is trust.
- Students will put instruments away when the director excuses them.
- If a student is unable to participate in classroom activities due to medical reasons, a doctor’s note is required.
- Students must stay involved in the rehearsal from start to finish.
 - When another section is rehearsing, silently follow along, should you be called upon to join in, or critique the performance. This also provides constructive rehearsal time.
 - Listen to the conductor at all times.
 - Talking while the conductor is rehearsing or giving instructions is never appropriate.
 - All students are expected to participate in all class activities to the best of his or her ability.
- Every student is expected to be respectful of themselves, other students, the classroom materials, and the director.
- Students are expected to prepare their music to the best of their ability, making efficient use of rehearsals.

Grading

The instrumental music department uses a standards-based grading system. This system gives students more specific feedback on their knowledge and skills. For each standard, students will receive a score based on their proficiency on standards. The grading is as follows:

- 4 = Exceeds Standard
- 3 = Meets Standard
- 2 = Progressing Toward Standard
- 1 = Work Needed

The instrumental music standards can be broken down into three categories: Performance Standards (Wind Instruments), Performance Standards (Percussion Instruments) and Rehearsal Standards.

Instrumental Music Standards

Performance Standards (Wind Instruments)

- W-1: Tone
- W-2: Intonation
- W-3: Rhythm
- W-4: Technique
- W-5: Style

Performance Standards (Percussion Instruments)

- P-1: Battery Rhythm
- P-2: Battery Technique
- P-3: Mallet Rhythm
- P-4: Mallet Technique
- P-5: Style

Rehearsal Standards (Everyone)

- R-1: Contributes Positively to the Progress of Class
- R-2: Uses Proper Horn Angle/Grip Consistently
- R-3: Is Prepared for Rehearsal with the Proper Equipment
- R-4: Can Play a Wide Range of Pitches Accurately
- R-5: Practice Sheets

Practice

Students are required to spend some time outside of class preparing for our next rehearsal. Preparation outside of class will strengthen our band and allow us to work on various group aspects of the music during rehearsal. A packet of practice sheets will be handed out to each student. If a student ever needs more, Mr. Connelly always has plenty of extras. Expectations for practice are as follows:

- Students are expected to practice 90 minutes each week.
- Completed practice sheets must be turned in each week on Monday.
- Completed practice sheets must include the student name, amount of time practiced, and parent signature.

School-Owned Equipment

For each school-owned item checked out, a contract form will be filled out and signed by both the student and the director. Normal wear and tear on school instruments and/or equipment will be paid for by the school. Damage incurred to the instrument because of abuse or carelessness is expected to be paid for by the student. The final decision regarding payment rests with the director and/or administration.

Additional Supplies

All percussionists must have their own required sticks and mallets. School and personal equipment will be kept stored neatly in the percussion cabinet when left in the band room. Other supplies (reeds, oil, etc...) are available for purchase from the band office. All reed players should have at least 3 working reeds at all times.

Instrument Care

A working instrument is necessary for success in band rehearsal and at performances. All students need to take care of their instruments. If an instrument needs to be repaired, please let Mr. Connelly know. It can be sent in through the school. The repair will be billed to the student, if it is not for a school-owned instrument. Here are the expectations for basic instrument care.

- An instrument, when stored at school, must be stored in the appropriate assigned lockers in the instrument storage room. Close and latch your cases. Please do not leave instruments lying open when stored in the instrument storage area. Many students will be using this room throughout the day.
- Do not leave the instrument storage room in disarray. It will be periodically checked for cleanliness.
- Be sure that your name appears on the outside and inside of your case.
- It is an extremely good idea to have the SERIAL NUMBER of your instrument recorded in a safe place at home.
- Woodwind instruments need to be checked for good playing condition and seating of all pads. If faulty, they need to be repaired or replaced.
- Brass instruments should be free of dents that affect good playing condition. All slides must be free to slide in and out.
- A representative comes in from Marshall Music once a week. If you would like to take care of the repair process or pick up supplies on your own, here is the contact information of the area music stores:

Marshall Music Company
545 28th St. SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49509
(616) 530-7700

Meyer Music
675 Lakewood
Holland, MI 49424
(616) 396-6583

6th Grade Band Calendar 2014-15

PLEASE NOTE: All events listed on this calendar are **required**.

Date	Event	Time
December 11	Winter Concert (with High School Bands)	7:00pm
April 28	Spring Concert (with 5 th Grade Band)	7:00pm

Parents: There are Band Booster meetings that take place during the school year. We invite and encourage your attendance. Meeting places and times are posted in the band newsletter.

Attendance Policy for Performances

By enrolling in this class, each member has made a commitment to attend every evening performance event required for his or her ensemble. Every member of the Instrumental Music Department is important. We cannot be our best without every member giving his or her all.

All required event information will be published well in advance. Please be sure to have an up-to-date calendar, as changes out of my control can and do occur. It is the responsibility of the student and his or her parents to double check obligations **well in advance**.

Absences

- The decision to excuse belongs to the director.
- Serious illness or a death in the family are the *only* automatically excused absences.
- Lack of transportation is **NOT** considered an excused absence.
 - **PLEASE NOTE:** the director will help arrange transportation if need.
- If a student is absence from a performance for any reason, he or she will need to complete an alternate performance in order that he or she can be assessed on the performance standards.
- Pre-Approved Absences
 - Notice of an absence should be submitted in writing for approval to the director **at least two weeks** in advance.
 - The decision to excuse belongs to the Director.
- Illness:
 - If an emergency arises the day of a performance, a parent must call and leave a message explaining the absence **at least 1 hour** prior to the performance.
 - If a student has a fever or is throwing up they should not attend the concert and a parent should call or email the director. **A cold or sore throat is not reason to miss a concert.**
 - **Please note:** If a student is well enough to attend school it is expected that they are well enough to attend the concert.
- Emergency Absences:
 - If due to the nature of the emergency a parent is unable to contact the director prior to performance time, a phone call or a written note with a parent signature explaining the reason for the absence should be submitted to the director within two days of the performance.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Students must be in school all day to be allowed to participate in any performances.
 - If a student needs to participate, but was absent for part of the day, he or she may be able to participate, with the approval of the principal.
 - If a student has a doctor or dentist appointment, please let the director know in advance, so that they might be able to participate

Signature Sheet

STUDENTS AND PARENTS: Please sign below. Your signature indicates that you have received the above information and are aware of the policies within the handbook.

STUDENTS

- I understand the information provided in this Handbook regarding the policies that will be used throughout the school year in instrumental music.
- I acknowledge that my attendance is required at all public performances. I understand the attendance policies and will do my best to identify any conflicts at least two weeks in advance and inform my director.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

PARENTS

- I have read and understand the information in this Handbook regarding the policies that will be used throughout the school year.
- I understand that my child is required to attend all performances, and have reviewed the attendance policies. I will do my best to contact the director at least two weeks in advance if I see a conflict.

Please also check the following if they apply:

- I am interested in helping with music events this year.
- I will complete a WISH Volunteer profile so that I can volunteer to help 😊

Phone Numbers: () ____ - _____ E-mail: _____

() ____ - _____

Best way to contact: _____

Parent Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

****PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS SHEET TO MR. CONNELLY NO LATER THAN WED., SEPT. 10.****