

Hightower Trail Middle School Band



2017-2018 6th Grade Band Handbook

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Hightower Trail Middle School Band

Dear HTMS Band Families,

Welcome to the 2017-18 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 for a *daily*, "hands on" experience not often 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 sincere music-making for outstanding performances. This mission statement aligns with the school's mission statement; particularly the Engagement and Performance categories (see HTMS Student Handbook).

Instructional Emphasis

The HTMS Vision Statement for 2017-18 is: "Learning through Engagement, Performance, Application."

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.

Bring Your Own Device

The Cobb County School District rules regarding BYOD apply in the band room. Only with teacher permission are student allowed to use their device in band class. Your child must have the BYOD agreement on file with their pod teachers in order to use their device.

Grading System

6th Grade

Summative Assessment - Pass-offs	35%
Summative Assessment - Music Theory	15%
Formative Assessment - Rehearsal Participation	40%
Formative Assessment - Rehearsal/Performance Etiquette	10%

Summative Assessment: Playing Tests/Pass-offs

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.

Summative Assessment: Music Theory Assignments

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. Worksheets labeling music for performance fit into this category.

Formative Assessment: Rehearsal Participation

Students are expected to be full participants in rehearsals every day to the best of their ability. Students are also 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 at no extra cost.

Formative Assessment: Rehearsal/Performance Etiquette

Students are expected to demonstrate the following qualities on a consistent daily basis; these qualities are expected at concerts as well:

Rehearsal/Performance Etiquette includes the following, but is not limited to:

Proper posture, active listening, sincere attempt to demonstrate mastery, pleasant demeanor, receptive to instruction, proper response to class instruction and correction and silent actions while various groups are addressed which may not always include your child.

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** 6th: *Standard of Excellence - ENHANCED*, Book 1 (red)
3. **Pencil** Keep in your case or band locker.
4. **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.

***BYOD usage in band class:**

It is highly recommended that students have a metronome/tuner app on their phone. We recommend the app called Tonal Energy (or equivalent): www.tonalenergy.com

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 contacted by phone or email
3	N	Student behavior documented in Behavior Log Parent contacted by phone or email Appropriate consequence determined
4	U	Student behavior documented in Behavior Log Parent contacted by phone or email 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. Make-ups will be graded based on the quality of the individual's 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 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 T-shirt.
Blue jeans.
Sneakers.

Boys:

Band T-shirt.
Blue jeans.
Sneakers.

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

The Band Room is open for practice most mornings from **8:00-9:00 am**, and most afternoons from **4:15-5:00 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; most students in these groups take 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

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.

Band Fundraiser

The Band Program will sponsor one annual fundraiser each year. It is scheduled to begin on October 3 and will conclude on October 17. The fundraiser provides for services and funds that enhance the education for the students but are not supplied by the CCSD. Money raised will go toward, but is not limited to the following: LGPE fees, Bus Transportation, Recording fees, Clinicians, 6th Grade Instrument Fittings, SmartMusic workstations and subscriptions, Website maintenance, Commissioning new music, and Professional Development. More information will be available to students on the Kickoff Day, October 3, and on the Band Website.

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 withdraw from the band class, the following HTMS Music Department Withdrawal Procedure shall be followed:

1. A parent note or email must be submitted to the band directors.
2. The parent note must be submitted by the end of the first 2 days of the school year. Withdrawal from Band class at the end of the 9-week grading period is not permitted.
3. Once the parent note is received, a director/parent/student conference shall 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 6th Grade Band Calendar 2017-2018

August

Mon 14 Bring Instruments (6th grade) class

September

Fri 1 Commence Pass-off completion class

October

Tues 3 Band Fundraiser Kickoff class

Fri 6 1st Pass-off completed by this day class
(End of 1st 9 week grading period)

Tues 17 Band Fundraiser orders / money deadline 8-9am HTMS Band Rm

November

Thurs 9 Pass-Off Goal 1: #23 class

Tues 7 or 14 Band Fundraiser Pickup (tentative) 12-7pm HTMS Band Rm

Thurs 16 6-1 / 6-2 Band Concert report tba HTMS Theater

December

Mon 18 Pass-Off Goal 2: #49 class

January

Thurs 4 Resume Pass-off completion class

February

Fri 2 Pass-Off Goal 3: #63 class

March

Wed 14 Pass-Off Goal 4: #84 class

April

Fri 20 Pass-Off Goal 5: #96 class

May

Thurs 3 6-1 / 6-2 Band Concert report tba HTMS Theater

Mon 21 Pass-Off Goal 6: #117 class