



Developing Lifelong Excellence in Young People Through a Variety of Music Education Experiences.

A note from the director....

Greetings parents and members of the East Paulding Middle School Band Program! I hope you have had a wonderful and restful summer.

To our returning parents and students, 'Welcome back!' and to our new members, 'Welcome to the East Band Family!'

Band is a wonderful opportunity for the Middle School Student. Not only does band foster creative development, it can touch the life of the student in a way no other subject can. Studies have shown time and time again that students belonging to a musical ensemble achieve higher test scores and more advanced emotional development. More than that, band is the beginning of a lifetime as a musician. Long after the days in the classroom are over, memories and skills from band will be a part of your everyday life. The rewards of discipline, practicing, and working together to achieve a common goal cannot be replaced.

This handbook is written to inform both student and parent of the policies, procedures, and goals of the band program at EPMS. Please take time to read and discuss this handbook with your family. After reading through the information, please sign the acknowledgement form and return it to school.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions about this handbook, or anything else in the band program. I am eager to get to know each of you and to work together with you to continue to build upon a tradition of excellence set forth by previous directors and band members!

Sincerely,
Jessica Thomas
Band Director

2019-2020 East Paulding Middle School Band Handbook

PURPOSE

The middle school band program at East Paulding Middle School seeks to offer each student who is interested and eager to learn, an enjoyable learning experience centered on individualized musicianship and ensemble performance. A working understanding of basic tone production, rhythmic comprehension, fingerings, music vocabulary, dynamics, articulations, scales and key signatures, and rehearsal and performance of middle school literature reflects the East Paulding Band goals of achievement.

EXPECTATIONS

Members of the East Paulding Middle School bands are expected to do more than simply play their instruments well. The following are required of all members who participate in the program.

- Be on time for all classes, rehearsals, and performances.
- Follow all procedures.
- Keep up with all equipment. Make sure you have the necessary materials for rehearsals and performances.
 - Instrument (all parts, including mouthpiece)
 - Method Book
 - Band folder with current music (students must use a paper 3 ring folder; sheet protectors are optional)
 - Maintenance supplies (reeds, cork grease, valve oil, slide oil, cleaning materials)
 - Pencil (required each day...NO PENS)
 - Smart Music System purchase (encouraged, but not required-go to smartmusic.com to order this year's subscription)
- Respect the learning environment.
- Respect all property.
- No food or drinks allowed. This includes GUM.

These rules are in addition to any district and school rules.

Classroom Procedures

- Enter the classroom quietly. Place all belongings under your chair and large instrument cases on the shelf during class time.
- Get started on any activity listed on the board. (Traditionally involves air playing current musical selections or a short-written assignment; please note that playing out loud will result in a consequence)
- Two minutes after the tardy time, Mrs. Thomas will step to the podium to begin breathing exercises and warm ups; full participation is required. (Students who do not bring materials to class must still participate.)
- Students must obtain permission to leave their seat.
- Mrs. Thomas will allow restroom visits, one student at a time, at the end of instructional time. Allowances will be made for emergencies.
- Hands up = instruments in ready to play position
- At the end of the class the teacher will choose sections with the cleanest, straightest, quietest rows to put their instruments up first before the bell rings and dismissals begin.
- Cell phones are not allowed in band class unless instructed otherwise by Mrs. Thomas.

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Consequences

1. Warning
2. Teacher Conference with Student
3. Parent-Teacher Conference with Student and Admin
4. Teacher Assigned Detention
5. Administrator Referral (Serious offenses such as fighting or theft may require this step immediately.)

Concert Procedures

- Attendance at concerts is mandatory per our Georgia State Music Standards. Mrs. Thomas will work with students who have emergencies arise.
- Students will arrive 10 minutes prior to warm up time and wait quietly in their designated area with their materials.
- At call time the director will begin to warm up and tune the ensemble. It is imperative to be as quiet as possible during warm up and tuning because of the slight differences in pitch that must be heard for proper adjustment. Failure to stay silent during tuning and warm up may result in dismissal from the entire performance.
- School and band rules and procedures apply to performances. Failure to follow these will result in a consequence which may end in dismissal from the concert.
- All performers must stay for the entire concert.
- Dismissal should be an event without running, pushing, or any other similar behavior. Students will exit the stage from the side and walk to the designated area to meet family members.

Consequences

- Warning
- Temporary Removal from Performance
- Conference with Administrator
- Removal from Performance
- Severe Discipline Problems will be handled with a referral at school the next day.

Rewards

There are several positive rewards in the band program itself. From learning something new to the thrill of competition, there is something for almost everyone. Students can be chosen for the following activities as an additional reward for going above and beyond the call of duty:

- Paulding County Honor Band
- Festival Invitational Groups
- Annual field trips and competitions
- District and State Level Honor Bands

Dropping Band

While we hope that all students spend all three of their middle school years in band, we realize that situations will arise in which a student needs to remove band from their schedule. To minimize the impact to the ensemble, as well as give students time to make an informed decision, students will only be allowed to drop at end of the school year. Other circumstances will be handled at the band director and administrators' discretion.

Students will be allowed to rejoin band after dropping at the discretion of the band director and administration.

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Severe Discipline Clause: In the event a student continuously, blatantly, or maliciously causes a serious classroom disruption, he or she will be referred to an administrator. This may result in recommendation for dismissal from the program.

Grading Procedures

Grading Breakdown

60% Tests (Playing Tests, Written Tests, Performances, Rehearsals,

Band is a performance-based class. Each student is required to be at rehearsals and performances. Please see explanation below.

Each student is expected to attend, be on time, and be prepared for all performances. Each student will receive a test grade for every concert that he/she is required to attend. If a student misses a concert with a *written* excuse, they will have until the end of the grading period the concert is in to make up the grade. To make up a missed concert, the student will be required to perform their music for Mrs. Thomas in a private setting or a similar situation. A written assignment may be used in addition to or instead of playing. If the concert is not made up the student will receive a zero for that performance grade. Excuses will be approved or denied at the band director's discretion. The director will allow partial credit for an unexcused absence. No make-up work is equal to a performance experience for musical and personal growth.

Playing Tests- In order to ensure the success of your child's future musicianship, we use playing tests as a record and a method of grading your child's progress. At least three playing tests per nine weeks will be played aloud in class. Your child will be individually graded on accuracy and tone production. Playing tests will either be assessed through recording, through live playing, or a mix of both mediums.

40% (Daily Grade/Class Participation/Assignments) For each day in class the student is unprepared a daily grade of zero will be posted. Each day a child is prepared is a 100. Band is a team effort. Being a part of it means being on time and having all necessary equipment. A student not prepared for class by not having an instrument or proper equipment cannot participate in band. As the class plays their instruments, there will be nothing for the unprepared child to do except individual writing assignments of the director's choice. The band does not have instruments that students can borrow.

There will be specific written assignments in band from time to time, both in class and as homework. Written assignments will be graded on grammar, effort, and accuracy.

*****ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE AN INSTRUMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN BAND*****

Any student who is not provided with an instrument will be provided with a school owned instrument if one is available. Students who are consistently lacking the necessary materials to participate will be removed from band at the end of the Semester Grading Period.

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Practicing

“Practice doesn’t make perfect...perfect Practice makes perfect!”-Vince Lombardi

“Don’t practice until you get it right, practice until you can’t get it wrong”

All students are expected to practice **outside** of class time. This is necessary in order to maintain progress in total musicianship.

A major factor in improving playing skills of each student is having a daily practice routine. This importance cannot be over-emphasized. This plays a major role in the improvement of your child on his/her instrument. Practicing should be thought of as daily homework for band. Students should strive to practice an average of 20 minutes per day. Although students are not required to document practice time, it will be reflected in performance, pass-off and daily grades. Students who do not practice will not be able to perform to the best of their ability and risk falling behind in class.

Practice Techniques

1. Break the song or exercise into smaller pieces. Play the smaller piece a few times. Play the next small piece. Now, play both pieces in a row. Work through the song/exercise in this manner.
2. Say the note names while doing the fingerings on the instrument.
3. Play with one foot in the air.
4. Play a section with a different rhythm-instead of what is written, change it, and then go back to the regular way.
5. Play very slowly and **gradually** get faster.
6. Write the numbers of the assigned songs/exercises on different pieces of paper. Randomly pull out a piece of paper and play that song.
7. Give a family/pet/stuffed animal/over the phone recital.
8. Make a tape recording as a gift for a family member.
9. Practice with a friend.

Private Lessons

We encourage ALL serious musicians to seek out private lessons on his/her instrument. This helps the musician with a more in - depth study of their instrument and helps them prepare for those important auditions. See Mrs. Thomas for help in securing a private lessons teacher!

OUR BANDS

Sixth Grade-In 6th grade band, students are taught the fundamentals of playing their instruments. Proper hand position, breathing, note reading, and instrumental maintenance are some of the major concepts covered. The 6th grade band will perform at the Winter and Spring concerts. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

Seventh Grade

In 7th grade we will work on advancing knowledge of their instrument as well as music in general. Great attention will be given to reinforcing good playing habits and a quality sound. The 7th grade will perform at LGPE and the Winter and Spring Concerts. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

Eighth Grade

By the time a student reaches 8th grade band, they have already had 2 years of instruction of their instrument, and they are ready to perform music at a more advanced level. We may split the two classes into two separate bands. The 8th grade will perform at LGPE and the Winter and Spring concerts. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

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EPMS Raider Winds

This is an auditioned/selected group that meets after school on Tuesdays (Schedule TBD). It is open to 7th and 8th grade band members. This is the top performing ensemble at EPMS. They will perform at the District 7 LGPE (Festival) and the Southern Star Music Festival affiliated with Six Flags. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

**** Please be aware that there may be additional after school rehearsals to prepare for performances. These will be given at no less than two weeks' notice. ****

Parent Pick Up Policy for Rehearsals, Performances, and Events Outside of the School Day

Band is a co-curricular activity. This means we will have events both during and outside of the school day. It is imperative that students not only arrive on time but be picked up on time as well. Dates and times for events are placed on the band calendar as far ahead as possible so that plans may be made for rides in advance

- Students who are picked up late from an event outside of the school day will be temporarily suspended from the activity.
- Students who are picked up late more than once will be removed from the activity for the rest of the season or year.

Method Books

6th Grade Band

- Essential Elements Book 1

7th Grade Band

- Essential Elements Book 2
- Foundations for Superior Performance (Raider Winds)

8th Grade Band

- Foundations for Superior Performance
- 101 Rhythmic Rest Patterns

Other books may be provided through the school.

Uniforms

The Band performs as one, therefore our appearance as one is also important. The *required* Middle School band uniform will consist of the East Bands Black Polo, Black Pants, and Black Dress shoes.

The East Bands Polo will be available for purchase through the school. A letter will be sent home with information after the start of the year.

-If purchasing a uniform is a financial hardship, please contact Mrs. Thomas by email or phone.

Instruments/Accessories

It is the goal of the band program to help all students achieve success in music. The instruments chosen are chosen based on reliability and are instruments that are designed to make it easier for the student to learn. There are many different brands of instruments. The ones recommended are not the only instruments that will work...However, these instruments tend to be more reliable. Remember, an instrument is like a finely tuned machine. It does not take much to cause it not to operate properly.

The EPMS band will provide certain instruments because of financial reasons. These are instruments that would cost the individual over \$2500.00. These instruments can be checked out from the school through written contract. Because these instruments are offered at little cost to the student, students and parents are

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responsible for care and maintenance of the instrument while it is in their possession. INSTRUMENTS will not be distributed until a school instrument check-out form is returned to the band director! Please note that an individual may purchase or rent these instruments instead of having them school furnished.

The school instrument usage fee for 2019-2020 is \$25 per semester.

Music Vendors

Below is a list of local vendors who have rented to our school in the past and serve our school on an ongoing basis.

Music and Arts- musicarts.com or 404-389-0455

Gadsden Music-gadsdenmusic.com or 256-546-9381

Big Note Music-bignotemusic.biz

Repairs-

- Students who rent from Gadsden Music can receive repair service at EPMS each week. Students must fill out a repair form and place their instrument and form on the repair area that morning.
- Students who buy/rent their instrument from another company must take their instrument to that vendor for repair.
- Students who own their horn may have it repaired through Big Note Instrument Repair. This is a mobile unit that visits our school by app for on-site repairs. Parents may sign up and pay for this service through the Big Note Music App or their website.

Please see Mrs. Thomas form for our recommendations for instrument brands, reeds, and other suggested materials.

****If financial obligations are in issue in regards to procuring and instrument or supplies, please contact Mrs. Thomas by phone or email.****

Other Performance Opportunities

There are many ways for the individual to succeed on his/her own. None of these activities are required, and the work will be done outside of regular band class. We encourage every motivated student to try for some of the groups. The rewards are well worth the hard work! Consistent practice at home will lead to great things.

District VII Honor Band- The top players in our region are named to the District Honor Band. The audition consists of a short musical selection, scales, and sight-reading. Players meeting certain criteria are eligible to audition for the All- State Band. Making the District band does not guarantee a spot or an audition with the All-State Band. Students interested in auditioning should inform their band director and pay the registration fee.

Paulding County Honor Band-This band is like the District Honor band but is strictly for band students in Paulding County.

All-State Band- This is the top musical honor in the state for band. It is an extremely selective group. Each year thousands of middle school students from across the state try out for this group and only 80-100 are chosen. This Audition consists of more sight-reading and two prepared pieces.

District Solo/Ensemble-This is an opportunity for students to play for judges as a solo performer or as part of a small ensemble. Forms will be distributed when they become available in the spring.

* PLEASE consult the band director BEFORE signing up for District Honor Band, All-State OR Solo-Ensemble! Students who wish to participate in these events should plan on working with the band director before or after school on audition material. *

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Parent Involvement

Parents play a crucial role in our program. Without your help and support, we cannot accomplish all of our goals. Parents are needed as volunteers in many areas in the program. Chaperones, fundraiser helpers, and equipment helpers are needed throughout the year.

You can help your student and the band program by

1. Showing an interest in your child's study.
2. Help keep the instrument in good repair with periodic servicing and see that your child has reeds, oil, and other supplies necessary to keep the instrument in good working order.
3. Ask your child to play for you occasionally and help them to establish a practicing schedule.
4. Keep a schedule of band activities in a prominent place to help avoid conflicts with other activities and appointments.
5. Volunteer time to the middle school band program. Parental involvement is always greatly appreciated.
6. Donate small needed items like paper, hand sanitizer, Ziploc bags, etc. Mrs. Thomas will share needs as they arise. Feel free to email and ask.

**If you are interested in helping, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Thomas. As chaperones and volunteers are needed, communication will be sent home through students or by e-mail/website/BAND.

Band Website

It is now easier than ever to stay up to date with band information through the band website. Forms, dates, and other information will be shared this way. Please check the website frequently. The EPMS Band page can be accessed at: **www.eastpauldingmsband.weebly.com**

We will also use BAND to send home information and updates from time to time. Please sign up for the BAND Account for the grade/ensemble that applies to your student. Information can be found on the band website.