

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Dickerson Middle School Band Program! Many of you are familiar with our program, either returning to band from last year, or through involvement with other students and siblings. However, each year there are always many families new to the Dickerson Band.

Band class can be an exciting course for the middle school student. It provides an outlet for creativity, as well as a “hands-on” hour of learning during the school day. More so than any other subject, music possesses the power to touch all aspects of a student’s personality: the intellectual, the physical, the emotional, the psychological, and the social. Instrumental music engages students in a group activity that explores appreciation of music as an art form, gives students a vehicle to use their free time constructively, and allows students to work together and give quality public performances. Band class helps to develop proper work habits through the academic self-discipline of its curriculum and by following a daily practice routine.

As shown in recent studies, music classes are also beneficial to the intellectual development of young students. The College Board reports that students enrolled in music performance classes scored **61** points higher on the verbal portion and **42** points higher on the math portion of the SAT than their non-arts peers. A recent study by the American Psychological Association showed that just 15 minutes of private music instruction a week could dramatically improve the type of intelligence needed for high-level math and science, and the U.S. Department of Education lists the arts as subjects that *college-bound middle school students should take*. More than half of the engineering students at Georgia Tech played a musical instrument in High School, and many Fortune 500 business leaders note that students participating in music performance classes acquire the skills and qualities needed to succeed in the business world. Edward H. Rensi, the President and CEO of McDonald’s Corporation, U.S.A., states that “in addition to learning the valuable lesson that it takes hard work to achieve success, no matter what the arena, music education can provide students with a strong sense of determination, improved communication skills, and a host of other qualities essential for successful living.”

Most band students, however, enjoy band because it is fun! Students just starting to play an instrument can hear improvement every day, and older students learn to recognize progress in their own rehearsals and home practice sessions. In band, student achievement is measured not only through individual accomplishments, but also through the public performances given by the entire group throughout the year.

This handbook is for your information to enable you to become acquainted with the policies and procedures of the Dickerson Middle School band program. It is important that you and your child read this handbook in order to familiarize yourself with our policies, regulations, and procedures. After reading the handbook, we request that you and your child complete the information form in the back and return it to one of the band directors. One new policy this year is that band is now a year-long course. No changes in schedules will be allowed during the course of the year.

All of the information found in this handbook, as well as more information about our program, can be found on our website: www.DickersonBand.com. Please check this site often for news and updates!

If you have any questions concerning the handbook or the band program, please feel free to email or call the school, (770) 578-2710 Ext. 237, for further information. All of the staff involved with the DMS bands look forward to working with you and your child this coming school year, and we hope to see you at our concerts.

Sincerely,

John Palmer,
Director of Bands
john.palmer@cobbk12.org

Scott Brown
Assistant Director
scott.brown@cobbk12.org

Dickerson Band Syllabus

The mission of the Curriculum and Instruction Division of the Cobb County School District is to increase student learning through the development and implementation of a rigorous and relevant curriculum and identification of effective instructional resources and strategies that challenge all students to maximize their potential. The Dickerson Bands aim to improve the musical skills of all students in grades 6 – 8. Through individual, small ensemble, and large ensemble rehearsals and performances, we strive to assist each student in meeting the District-wide Power Standards:

MASTERY LEVEL DEFINITIONS:

Band – Novice Level: The Novice Level standards should be met by the end of a student’s 7th grade year. Often, students will meet Novice standards early, and will be moved on to Proficient Standards.

Band – Proficient Level: The Proficient Level standards should be met by the end of a student’s 8th grade year. Often, students will meet Proficient standards early, and will be moved on to Advanced standards.

Band – Advanced and Mastery Levels: The Advanced and Mastery levels are addressed by the High School Band curriculum. Students meeting these standards in Middle School are given opportunities such as Solo/Ensemble Festival and All-State Band to showcase their talents.

COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BAND POWER STANDARDS

Power Standard # 1: The Learner will be able to perform with expression and accuracy, alone and with others, a varied repertoire representing diverse genres, culture and styles in music literature.

Power Standard # 2: The Learner will be able to understand the system, vocabulary, theory, and the conventions necessary to read and notate music.

Power Standard # 3: The Learner will be able to create music using improvisational and compositional techniques in small and large ensembles.

Power Standard # 4: The Learner will be able to analyze and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others’ performances by applying specific criteria.

Power Standard # 5: The Learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding on the historic and cultural context of the performance literature.

Power Standard # 6: The Learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

More information on these standards, as well as the new State standards can be found on the *Picasso* web portal: <http://picasso.cobbk12.org> – Click on the *Middle School* Link, then *Fine Arts*.

These pages will list some of the policies and procedures we utilize to assist our students in meeting the high music and academic standards set by our school, our District and our State.

Classroom Procedures

With so many students trying to rehearse and learn in one class at the same time, it is necessary that ALL students follow the same code of conduct.

*The following behaviors are **EXPECTED** of each band student:*

- Be RESPECTFUL to others and their property.
- Take care of your equipment and facilities.
- Come to class prepared, organized and on time.
- Practice ACTIVE LISTENING at all times during class.

CONDUCT EXPLANATIONS

Dickerson Middle School encourages self-discipline in each individual student. Learning takes place when a student has developed positive behavior patterns that are based on self-discipline and self-direction. In large classes such as band, poor behavior choices of one student can adversely affect the learning process of 80 other students.

Satisfactory: Conduct that generally follows classroom and school rules and does not interfere with the learning of others.

Needs Improvement: Conduct which frequently causes class disruption and does not always conform to classroom and school rules. Students whose conduct merits a “Needs Improvement” in conduct will have received verbal warnings from a director, have completed an in-class detention assignment, and may have been issued a detention.

Unsatisfactory: Conduct that consistently causes class disruptions that interfere with the learning of others and often does not conform to classroom and school rules. Students earning an “Unsatisfactory” in conduct will have received verbal warnings from a director, completed an in-class detention assignment, had a conference with a director, and received at least one detention. Parents will be notified of disruptive behavior before an “Unsatisfactory” is given.

UNIFORM

When the Dickerson Bands perform, either at Dickerson or elsewhere, band students are acting as representatives of our school, our community, and perhaps even our state. Therefore, it is important for all students in the group to look their best at concerts. Depending on the type of performance and the time of year, the uniform will either be **CASUAL** or **FORMAL**.

If **CASUAL**, students will wear the Dickerson Band T-Shirt, blue jeans (without holes!), and school-appropriate shoes. If we are performing outdoors, shorts may be substituted for jeans. The Sixth Grade Band will always perform in this uniform.

The **FORMAL** uniform is a black dress with black, closed toe shoes for the girls, and a tuxedo with black socks and black dress shoes for the boys. These will be ordered at the beginning of the school year. Information on the uniform will be sent home from the Parent Uniform Committee in August. In general, formal dress is designed to exhibit pride in yourself, your band, and your school. NO jeans, T-Shirts, or sneakers/tennis shoes will be allowed as part of the **FORMAL** uniform. **All students must wear the proper uniform in order to perform with the band.**

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Band is a year-long course. Learning to play an instrument is a rewarding, yet challenging activity; from time to time students feel frustrated, and want to quit. As teachers, our job is to encourage our students to work through those frustrations and always strive for improvement. Therefore, **students must commit to participate in the band program for the entire year.** We hope each of our students will remain in the program through High School and beyond, but if they feel they need to drop music, they may at the end of the school year.

DMS Band Grading Policy

A student's grade in band class is determined through a points system. Students are awarded points for actively participating in class activities, being prepared for class, and completing assignments.

Grading Categories

- **Preparation**

Students are expected to come to class with all materials found on the Required Materials list.

- **Participation**

Students are expected to participate in all class activities, to focus their attention on the band director, and to follow individual and group instruction.

- **Concert/Playing Assessments**

Concerts are performance evaluations of classroom material, and are the final exams of concepts studied during the nine weeks. They are the culmination of weeks of hard work and practice, and give students the opportunity to display their musical skills and talents. Students are expected to attend all concerts, and are given concert dates very early in the year to assist in scheduling. A student who cannot attend a concert for any reason will need to submit an audio-tape or cd of the student performing the concert music individually for a performance evaluation

Individual Playing Assessments will take place periodically throughout the year. Most will be announced tests, though occasionally, graded playing assessments will be given unannounced. Any playing assessment other than a sight-reading assessment will be taken from material covered in class, and students will have ample time to prepare the material. Assessments offered via the SmartMusic program may be completed from home if the student has a home subscription, or on one of the computers in the band room before school.

- **Practice Records**

Students will be turn in a weekly record documenting their time spent practicing outside of class. Each weekly record must be signed by a parent to receive credit.

- **Written Assignments**

Written work will be assigned throughout the year. Most assignments will be completed in class.

- **Additional Bonus Opportunities**

Students will be given many opportunities to earn additional points by participating in ensembles, performing at Solo and Ensemble, auditioning for State and Honor Bands, attending extra rehearsals, taking private lessons, playing in a community or church band, attending music concerts, etc. The band directors award extra points on an individual basis, and students wishing to earn extra points must have director approval BEFORE attending the event.

Category	6 th Grade Weight	7 th Grade Weight	8 th Grade Weight
Preparation	30 %	25 %	20 %
Participation	30 %	25 %	20 %
Concert/Playing Assessments	20 %	30 %	40 %
Practice Records	10 %	10 %	10 %
Written Assignments	10 %	10 %	10 %
Bonus	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %

Band Required Materials

The following materials will be required of all band students during every rehearsal.
Students should bring each of these items to class every day, unless instructed otherwise.

Instrument

Accessories

- Mouthpiece
 - o Hard rubber mouthpiece for clarinets and saxophones
 - o 5C or 3C mouthpiece for trumpets
 - o mdc mouthpiece for French horns
 - o 6 ½ AL mouthpiece for baritones and trombones
- minimum of 2 good reeds (clarinets, saxophones, and oboes only)
- neckstrap (saxophones)
- valve/slide oil (brass)
- slide cream and small water “squir” bottle (trombones)
- metal straight mute (7th and 8th grade trumpets)
- sticks/mallets and stick bag (percussion)
 - o 1 pair general snare drum sticks (SD1 or equivalent)
 - o 1 pair yarn marimba/vibe mallets

Band Method Book (can be found at all local music stores)

- Essential Elements 2000, Book 1 (6th Grade)
- Foundations for Superior Performance (7th and 8th Grade)

Theory Book

- Alfred’s Essentials of Music Theory, Book 1 (6th Grade Only)

Music Folder

- all music must be kept in a student’s binder or school-provided music folder
- Students will be responsible for replacing lost sheet music
- 1” 3-Ring Notebook (All Grades)
 - o divider tabs (at least 4)
 - o clear plastic sheet protectors for music and handouts

Pencil

- mechanical preferred (it is best to just keep one in your case)
- no pens, please!

Recommended Materials for Home Practice

The following materials will make home practice much more enjoyable and productive!

- Wire Music Stand (required for UGA Clinic, All-State and Honor Bands)
- All-State Sight-reading Book (order forms available from Band Directors)
- Metronome
- Electric Tuner
- Tape Recorder (to record practice sessions)
- **SmartMusic Software** (includes metronome, tuner and recording feature)



2010 - 2011 Dickerson Middle School Band

Calendar of Events

DATE		EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
August	16	6 th Grade First Lesson Night	6:00 – 7:30 pm	Dickerson
	23	Fundraiser Kick-off		
	27	Solo and Ensemble Application Deadline		
September	10	8 th Grade Night @ Walton High School	5:00 – 9:30 pm	Walton HS
	7 – 8	Fundraiser Turn-in		
	10	All-State/Honor Band Application Deadline		
November	6	Solo/Ensemble	TBA	Pine Mt. MS
	16	6 th Grade First Concert	6:30 pm	Dickerson
	17	Fundraiser Delivery Day (tentative)	1:00 – 7:00 pm	Dickerson
December	4	Honor Band Auditions	TBA	Dodgen MS
	7	7 th and 8 th Grand Bands' Winter Concert	6:30 pm	Dickerson
	9 - 11	UGA Mid-Fest (selected 8 th Grade students)	(will leave DMS after lunch)	Athens, GA
January	8	All-State Band 2 nd Round Auditions		Perry, GA
February	11 - 13	District 12 Honor Band		Cooper MS
March	1	7 th and 8 th Grade LGPE Clinics	4:30 – 6:30 pm	Dickerson
	14 - 16	8 th Grade Performance Evaluation (band standardized testing)	TBA	McEachern HS
	22 - 25	7 th Grade Performance Evaluation (band standardized testing)	TBA	Kell HS
April	28	7 th and 8 th Grade Spring Concert	6:30 pm (7 th) 8:00 pm (8 th)	Dickerson
	29	Jazz Band Performance Evaluation	TBA	Walton
May	4 – 8	8th Grade Band Spring Trip		New York, NY
	TBA	Jazz Band at 5 th Grade Parent Orientation	6:00 pm	Dickerson
	12	6 th Grade Evening of the Arts 6 th Grade Band Spring Concert	TBA	Dickerson

*Please mark these events on your calendars now to avoid conflicts!
We hope to see you and your family at all of these events.*

STUDENT INFORMATION

Please complete this form and return to one of the band directors.

Student Name _____ Instrument _____ Grade Level _____

Address _____ Marietta, GA _____
street zip

Home Phone # _____

Father's Name _____ Work/Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Mother's Name _____ Work/Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Parent Volunteer Interest Survey

There are many ways the Dickerson Band program can benefit from parental involvement. From chaperoning trips and assisting students with uniforms before concerts to helping distribute locks and lockers, there are many ways parents can help operations run smoothly and allow directors to concentrate on providing quality instruction for all students. If you would like to volunteer with the bands, please take a moment to fill out this Parent Volunteer form. Our parent representative will compile a list of volunteers.

Thank you!!!!

I would like to volunteer for the following activities:

- ___ Assist with uniforms (fitting, check-out and check-in, or helping out before concerts)
- ___ Assist students before concerts with putting on bowties and cummerbunds
- ___ Assist with assigning locks and lockers (First and last weeks of school)
- ___ Assist with computer data entry (First month of school)
- ___ Assist with 6th grade band sign-up (First two weeks of school)
- ___ Nothing specific, just call if you need anything!
- ___ Other: Many parents have special talents and interests that may help to enrich the Dickerson Band Program. Please indicate below if you have any ideas for us!

I have received a copy of the Dickerson Middle School Band Handbook for the 2010 - 2011 school year, and I have read and reviewed with my child the policies and procedures contained therein. The policies set forth in this handbook are subject to change or amendment at the discretion of the principal or the band director. I understand my child has made a one-year commitment to the band program.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____