

G.K.M.S BAND HANDBOOK



2025 - 2026



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Welcome!

Dear Band Families,

Welcome to the Genoa-Kingston Middle School Band Program! I am looking forward to a great year of music making. Your student owes you a big 'thank you' for continuing to support their growth as they strive to become the best they can be on their instrument.

This handbook is designed to lay out the expectations, equipment, and schedule for the school year. Please take a moment to read through this handbook so that you are involved in this part of your child's education. With your support and encouragement, your child will have an extremely successful year!

The final page of this handbook is to be signed and returned by Friday, August 29th. Students will receive points for turning in the form.

Band is a curricular course that spans the whole academic year. Students will focus on developing their tone quality, technical ability, and musicality, providing the foundation your student needs to enjoy participating in band at the secondary level both in high school and beyond.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. Email is the quickest way to communicate with me (nlowe@gkschools.org). This will be an excellent year!

Concert Dates

Event	Date & Time	Location
Marching Band Night (8th Grade Only)	Friday, September 19th @ 7:00pm	GKHS Football Field
Fine Arts Showcase Concert (7th & 8th Grade only)	Monday, October 20th @ 7:00pm	GKHS Gymnasium
GKMS Band Concert	Thursday, December 18th @ 7:00pm	GKHS Auditorium
GKHS & GKMS Band Concert (7th & 8th Grade only)	Thursday, February 19th @ 7:00pm	GKHS Auditorium
Jazz Dance (Jazz Band only)	Saturday, April 25th from 6:00 - 10:00pm	GKHS Commons
GKMS Band Concert	Thursday, May 14th @ 7:00pm	GKHS Auditorium

Classroom Expectations

We want to make the band the best it can be, and we use our class time wisely. These rules will be followed in band so everyone will benefit from our class:

- The band works together as a team to create music – we are like a family! Students will be respectful and remain positive throughout the learning process. We will all help each other and support each other when mistakes are made.
- Always raise your hand to ask permission to talk. You miss what is taught and so do the people around you if you are talking.
- Do not play your instrument without permission during rehearsal; that is a distraction for you and those around you.
- Be on time to all lessons, rehearsals, and performances.
- It is expected that every student will be at every rehearsal and performance. Students who are well enough to attend school during the day are well enough to attend concerts after school. We count on each other to make music together.
- Students should bring their instrument, music, folder, and a pencil to lessons and rehearsals.
- Even if a student does not have an instrument/music, that student is still expected to come to their lesson. It is important that we know where the student is so that we can discuss what they will need to practice at home.
- Gum, candy, food, and soda are not permitted in the band room. A water bottle is welcome!

General Schedule & Course Descriptions

Period	Class
Before School (7:00-7:45)	Jazz Band
1st	N/A
2nd, 3rd, and 4th	Technique Class - <i>rotating; see below</i>
5th	7th Grade Band - <i>(7th Chorus on Wednesdays)</i>
6th	8th Grade Band - <i>(8th Chorus on Wednesdays)</i>
7th	6th Grade Band - <i>(6th Chorus on Wednesdays)</i>
8th, 9th, and 10th	Technique Class - <i>rotating; see below</i>

On **Wednesdays**, band students will attend AE (Academic Enrichment) in place of their regular band class. Chorus students will meet during those periods. Any student who participates in both band and chorus will not attend an AE class.

Jazz Band is an extracurricular class that students may choose to participate in. See below for more information.

Technique Class is a crucial part of the middle school band curriculum (*see page 8 for more detailed information*). The following page lists the days on which specific groups will attend band for their Technique Class. Please remember that this will operate on a six week long rotating schedule, consisting of periods 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 10.

6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Band

Students attend band class on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (*see above schedule*). During these rehearsals, students work on developing ensemble skills, such as following a conductor, cross-section listening, group dynamics/articulations, and musicality. These band rehearsals are essential for preparing students for their performances throughout the school year.

Google Classroom Codes

- 6th Grade Band: vsyvqwnp
- 7th Grade Band: t3pftaes
- 8th Grade Band: q5isa75j

Technique Class Lessons

In conjunction with the daily rehearsal, the District 424 music curriculum provides an opportunity for instrumental music students to have Technique Classes during their school day. These classes are essential for a middle school curriculum, as they allow for small group instruction that addresses instrument-specific skills. Students will be excused from one class period per week on a rotating schedule. For attendance and safety purposes, students are required to check in with their classroom teacher prior to leaving to attend band. These classes will rotate on a six week schedule (see above schedule). The class period will change weekly, but the day of the week will remain the same. Weekly schedules are posted outside of the band room and in each grade level hallway.

Technique Class Groups

Day	Groups
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8th Grade Flute & Oboe• 8th Grade Clarinet• 8th Grade Saxophone• 8th Grade Trumpet & French Horn
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8th Grade Percussion• 7th Grade Percussion• Chorus Group 1• Chorus Group 2
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6th Grade Percussion• 6th Grade Flute & Oboe• 6th Grade Clarinet• 6th Grade Saxophone
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6th Grade Low Brass (Trombone, Baritone, Tuba)• 6th Grade Trumpet & French Horn• 7th Grade Flute & Oboe• 7th Grade Clarinet
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8th Grade Low Brass (Trombone, Baritone, Tuba)• 7th Grade Saxophone• 7th Grade Trumpet & French Horn• 7th Grade Low Brass (Trombone, Baritone, Tuba)

Jazz Band

Jazz Band is designed for 7th and 8th grade students wishing to broaden their musical development and participation. Membership for this extra-curricular ensemble is based upon student desire, musical ability, and instrumentation needs. Rehearsal times are 7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Students should arrive at 6:45 a.m. in order for rehearsals to start promptly. Participation in the Jazz Band is optional and all performances are mandatory (please check the performance dates prior to signing up).

Equipment Information

Students should be respectful towards instruments: their own and others. If an instrument does not belong to a student, that student should not be touching it. Students should take care when walking around in lessons or rehearsal so as to not accidentally “nudge” other instruments on the ground or on chairs.

Grade	Equipment
6th & 7th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound Innovations Book 1 • Band folder • Pencil • Instrument Care Equipment (see below)
8th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Elements Book 1 • Band folder • Pencil • Instrument Care Equipment (see below)

Tips for keeping your instrument in good condition:

Brass	Woodwind	Percussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never fully remove the valves or slides • Oil valves regularly • Grease slides regularly • Run cleaning snake through instrument regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep reeds in cases when not in use • Run swab through instrument regularly • Use cork grease as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep sticks in bag when not in use • Don't touch the felt or yarn on the mallets • Students only need to bring their stick bag to school and can keep their snare/ bell kit at home

School Owned Instruments

School instruments are provided to students on a per-need basis, according to inventory. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain and care for school owned instruments as if it were their own. All procedures and supplies as prescribed above for maintenance and care are the same for school owned instruments.

Repairs and Vendors

At times, it becomes necessary to take your instrument to get repaired. If your student has an issue that needs repair work done on it, please make sure to contact one of the below companies:

Quinlan & Fabish Music Company Phone: 800-637-6872 Closest location: 59 Seegers Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005
The Instrument Barn Phone: 847-562-6616 Store Location: 11221 Dundee Road, Huntley, IL 60142

Instrument Care Supplies & Reeds

Instrument	Items
Flute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning swab
Oboe & Bassoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least three good reeds at all times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ www.nielsen-woodwinds.com ◦ 6th grade = Red string ◦ 7th grade = Black string ◦ 8th grade = Green string
Clarinet & Bass Clarinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reed guard • Cork grease • Cleaning swab • At least three good reeds at all times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 6th grade = Vandoren 2.5 ◦ 7th & 8th grade = Vandoren 3
Saxophone (Alto, Tenor, & Bari)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reed guard • Cork grease • Cleaning swab • Neck strap
Trumpet, Baritone, Tuba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouthpiece brush • "Snake" (internal slide cleaner) • Valve oil • Tuning slide grease
French Horn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouthpiece brush • "Snake" (internal slide cleaner) • Rotary valve oil • Tuning slide grease
Trombone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Snake" (internal slide cleaner) • Superslick slide cream or Slide-o-mix • Small spray bottle (filled with water) • Tuning slide grease
Percussion <i>*Please put your name on all of your personal equipment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percussion stick bag • Vic Firth SD 1 Snare Sticks • Innovative Fundamental Series F8.5 rubber mallets • Timpani mallets (labeled "General") • Innovative Percussion FS250 yarn mallets

Practicing

Students are encouraged to practice their instruments at least five days a week. A good rule of thumb is to practice any day that ends in a "y". Singing can be fatiguing due to lack of muscle development, so starting with a few minutes of practice is fine for beginning students.

Here are some practice guidelines:

Level of Experience	Fall	Spring
5th Grade or Beginner	10 min/week	15 min/week
6th Grade	15 min/week	25 min/week
7th Grade	30 min/week	40 min/week
8th Grade	60 min/week	60 min/week

Frequent, small practice sessions are more beneficial than one long session.

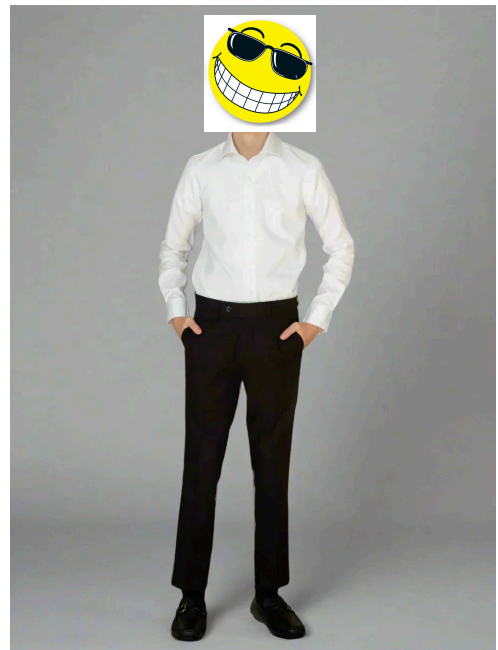
Students will not have a practice log to fill out, because we don't believe they help develop good practice habits. Students will be expected to practice however long as they feel will prepare them for their next lesson, or upcoming concert. We will know when a student is unprepared for a lesson and we will discuss solutions to help be more prepared for the next lesson.

There is no rule that a student MUST practice a certain number of minutes per week. Students need to practice so that they are comfortable singing, and so that they can stay together with their section within the chorus.

Concert Attire

All students should have the following for performances:

- White dress shirt
- Black pants
 - No jeans, shorts, skirts, or leggings.
- Black socks
 - Must be long enough so the ankles can not be seen when seated.
- Black shoes
 - Shoes must be 100% BLACK, there are no exceptions.
 - No flip-flops or open-toed shoes.



Grading Policy

Band grades will consist of the following:

- Tests & Concert Attendance = **80%**
 - Written and performance assessments
 - Students are required to attend ALL of the concerts in which they are performing throughout the year
- Participation and additional homework assignments = **20%**
 - Includes bringing all necessary materials to class
 - Instrument
 - Cleaning supplies, reeds, percussion stick bag, etc.
 - Music and method book
 - Pencil

Weekly participation grades will consist of the following:

- **4 points** for Band Rehearsals
 - One point per day (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday)
 - Students **must** bring their instrument to class in order to receive their daily point
 - Points will be adjusted accordingly if a student is absent from school on a Band Rehearsal day
- **2 points** for Technique Class Lesson
 - One point for attendance and participation
 - One point for bringing their instrument

Should a student miss their Technique Class Lesson, they will be able to make up the points by submitting a five minute long recording of them practicing their instrument at home. This can be submitted via Google Classroom using Screencastify. Students can also submit videos this way to make up points for days that they forgot to bring their instrument to class.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

As parents/guardians, your active involvement is one of the cornerstones of an excellent band program. You play a pivotal role in nurturing students' musical growth. Your support enhances practice routines, reinforces learning at home, and fosters a sense of community within the band. By collaborating closely, we can create an environment where students thrive and achieve their full potential, resulting in a rewarding and enriching musical journey.

The band program utilizes *Rooms* in order to communicate announcements and stay in touch with families. If you have a cell phone or smart device, please make sure to download the *GK Cogs App* in order to stay in touch.

Private Lessons

It is impossible to overemphasize the positive impact of private lessons. Individual instruction is the best way to help students fulfill their potential. The main benefit of a private lesson is weekly one on one instruction with an expert on your particular instrument. A private instructor will immediately reinforce strengths and give specific instruction for improvement. Please request our recommended list of private instructors if this is an advantage you wish to offer your child.

Acknowledgement

Please sign and return this portion as acknowledgement of the Genoa-Kingston Middle School Band Handbook no later than Friday, August 29th.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____