

Great Bridge Middle School Bands

Upholding Tradition, Building Excellence

Welcome to a new year in the Great Bridge Band!

It is with great excitement that we welcome you to a new year in the GBMS Band program!

Here is the big picture!

Playing a musical instrument and acquiring the unique habits of mind that come with it is one of the most incredible opportunities that our school can offer your child. The instrument in your child's hands has the power to transform their lives in ways that no other endeavor can. In addition to musical accomplishments, this year your child will learn to:

- Be patient and persistent with complex tasks;
- Delay gratification by working to sound better;
- Develop curiosity, problem solve, and cultivate grit.

You play a vital role in the musical education of your child, and you can be successful at this even if you don't believe yourself to be musical! Supporting your child at home is easy and fun — if you can teach them to wash dishes, you can help them develop a healthy practice routine at home! In the meantime, there are only a few things you need to keep in mind to ensure that your child enjoys music as part of their life for years to come:

1. **Treat music as a long-term commitment right from the start.** Students who identify that they will play their instrument for longer than one year outperform students who only commit to one year of playing by up to 400% — practicing the same amount of time if not less! The ideas and mindsets students bring to their musical instrument study have a direct effect on their success, and it's the parents' role to set the tone on the first day by not giving their child an "easy out" to quit. Decide to invest in your child's music education for at least a few years of their schooling, and you will see incredible results this year.

2. **Treasure the escape from "high-stakes" studies.** It seems that everywhere we turn, academic expectations run higher and panic begins to set in: about acing the exam, passing the SOL tests, or keeping up with "high-achieving" peers. Playing a musical instrument helps parents pull their children off this fast track, if even for a moment, and not worry that other children will wind up "ahead". Instrumental music gives children the room to find their genuine passions, the freedom to discover true independence, and the space to fail and bounce back. They will become better people this year through their musical studies.

3. **Embrace the “offline” time.** Your child’s ability to become a deep and complex person relies so much upon their ability to build their attention span. In our lightning-fast digital world, children do not have enough opportunity to build understanding and intelligence through mindful solitary activities. Musical instrument instruction facilitates this offline, “slow world” learning and brings children together in a unique, “unplugged” ensemble when they have Band.

4. **Understand that your child’s instrumental music experience is just as (if not more) crucial to their growth as human beings than any other subject.** Music is much more than a “special” or a “frill” subject — it is a core subject, and it should be approached that way by all of us. When taught with healthy rigor, it is often the most enjoyable subject during the school day, and the home practice should be treated as an essential part of the homework routine. When taught well and supported at home, the craft of learning a musical instrument develops fortitude, willpower, and metacognitive skills that parents stay up at night hoping their children have when they grow up.

At the beginning of every school year we are not only passionate about growing a new generation of musicians, music lovers, and future patrons of the arts — We are determined to arm your children with the tools to become great thinkers, citizens, and lifelong lovers of music. We will take care of the musical instruction on our end, but the actions of parents assisting their children’s practice at home, accompanied with a long-term commitment to their children staying in our school music program, will ensure that they receive the best education Great Bridge Middle School has to offer.

Below are the Chesapeake Public Schools' grading policies for middle school band, along with some additional information regarding instruments, supplies, and other relevant details.

Grading Policies:

Each student’s grade is determined through earning points in three areas of evaluation:

- **Assessments** (Playing tests and concert performances) - 40%
- **Practice** (Class participation/preparation and at-home practice) - 30%
- **Quizzes** (Skill benchmarks and written quizzes) - 30%

Detailed grading information and policies can be found in the class handbook available on the gbmsbands.org website.

Contact Information & Communication:

- ✓ Email
 - Mr. Graybill: Eric.Graybill@cpschools.com
 - Mr. Glosser: Benjamin.Glosser@cpschools.com
- ✓ SYNERGY

6th Grade Beginning of School Reminders

- ✓ **Don't know what you're playing yet? It's okay!** If we have not yet met with your child to assist them in selecting an instrument, we will meet with your child during class on the first day of school. We will not start playing our instruments until the second week of school, which should allow ample time to rent an instrument for your child.
- ✓ Students do not need their instruments on the first day of school.
- ✓ **Bring your instrument in the second week of school.** Students need to bring their instruments to school every day starting Monday of the second week of school. **Please make sure your child's name is on the instrument case!**
- ✓ **Bring instrument accessories at the beginning.** Along with your child's instrument, supplies, and accessories, they need to be in class every day. Students will be instructed which supplies may stay at home (They are used for daily, weekly, or monthly cleaning and maintenance.) Instrument-specific accessories can be found on the back of this page.
- ✓ **Students need a binder.** Please keep your music, handouts, etudes, etc. in a **three ring binder (1/2" to 1" size), in clear plastic sleeves**. A binder with a pocket inside the cover can help protect your music book and provide storage for a pencil. **Your name should be clearly displayed on your music binder and instrument case.**
- ✓ The **first practice record** will be distributed on Monday of the second week of school and will be due the next Monday.
- ✓ **Concert Attire:** Concert dress for all our bands is formal black attire. Students will need solid-black shoes, solid-black socks, and solid-black dress slacks. (no jeans, Dockers, leggings, etc.) Ladies may opt to wear a long, solid-black skirt instead of slacks. Students should also wear a solid black polo, solid black dress shirt or solid black blouse. **Please note: black tee shirts are not acceptable.** All shirts (boys and girls) must have a collar.

✓ **Concert Dates:**

Event	Who's Involved	When	Attire	Location
Premiere Concert	6th grade	2/11	Concert Black	GB HIGH SCHOOL
All-City Band	<i>Selected 6th</i>	4/24	Concert Black	TBD
Spring Recital	<i>Selected 6th</i>	4/30	Concert Black	GB MIDDLE SCHOOL
Spring Concert (6th & 7th)	6th & 7th grade	5/26	Concert Black	GB HIGH SCHOOL

Daily Band Class Supplies:

- ✓ ½" to 1" Three Ring Binder
- ✓ Clear Plastic Sleeves for the 3 ring binder.
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Instrument

Instrument Supplies and Accessories:

- ✓ **FLUTE:** A soft cotton cloth and a cleaning rod.
- ✓ **CLARINET:** *2 good reeds* (2 reeds is a minimum . . . most clarinet players have at least 4 good reeds at all times!), cork grease, swab.
- ✓ **ALTO SAXOPHONE:** Neck strap, *2 good reeds* (2 reeds is a minimum . . . most sax players have at least 4 good reeds at all times!), cork grease, swab.
- ✓ **TRUMPET:** Valve oil, tuning slide grease, mouthpiece brush, instrument cleaning cloth.
- ✓ **TROMBONE:** Slide oil or slide cream (Slide cream tends to work better. If you use slide cream, you will also need a small spray bottle of water. However, most beginning trombonists start with slide oil.), tuning slide grease.