

*Blythewood Middle School Band
Program*



2009-2010 Handbook

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Blythewood Middle School Band Program

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Blythewood Middle School Band Program
WELCOME!!!

Dear Band Parents,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year and thank you for being a member of the Blythewood Middle School Band program. I look forward to this year with great anticipation. I encourage you to be an active advocate for music in the educational life of your child. The study of music can contribute in a unique way to the overall development of all young people. Instrumental training and performance are invaluable parts of that process. Students will not only learn musical skills, but how to budget their time, and how to work in a large group setting. They will also learn discipline, commitment, hard work, and other extremely important life skills. Together with your child, your investment of time, effort, and energy can produce a lifetime of wonderful memories and enjoyment of music!

To function in a manner which benefits its members to the fullest, any program must have certain organizational procedures, rules, and regulations, and it is in this light that the Blythewood Middle School Band Handbook has been written. Its purpose is to answer any questions you may have concerning the band program, as well as establish clear guidelines and procedures by which the program will operate. The intent is to establish a common ground of agreement from which all members can accomplish both their individual goals and the goals of the entire organization. Please read it carefully with your child, become familiar with its content, and **sign and return the "STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY" at the end.** Many potential problems can be avoided by understanding the system within which we operate.

I am very excited to be apart of the Blythewood Middle School Band Program and am looking forward to an extremely successful year! Please feel free to contact me if I may be of some help or may answer any questions you might have. I am honored to be your band director, and I look forward to working with you and your child.

Sincerely,

Alanna Tate
Band Director
Blythewood Middle School

Philosophy

The band program at Blythewood Middle School strives to create an environment conducive to stimulating creativity and positive attitudes about the performance and enjoyment of music. Music is a true transmission of culture, and it is with this in mind that, through learning basic performance skills on an instrument, the band program attempts to develop a lifelong appreciation for the value of music. This three year program is designed to foster a basic understanding and appreciation for music, as well as provide the necessary skills to allow students to continue participation in band through high school.

Objectives

- Students will develop the technical skills necessary to play a musical instrument both as a solo instrumentalist as well as a member of an ensemble
- Students will develop the skills necessary to read music notation
- Students will develop the discipline that is required to successfully play an instrument.
- Students will learn about the proper care and maintenance of their instrument
- Students will demonstrate the requirements of dependability, punctuality, leadership and cooperation necessary for group participation of any sort

Student Obligations

1. Students are to be polite at all times to their fellow band members, director, chaperones, and guests.
2. Students should always have their parents read all materials sent home by the band director. Correspondence sent home will need to be signed by both the parent and the student and returned in a timely manner. This will be a consideration in the nine weeks grading process.
3. Students should always make plans to be a little ahead of any announced schedule. Remember: Punctuality is respect for the time of others.
4. Students will need to attend all rehearsals with the following items:
 - Instrument in good, clean, working condition
 - Music binder with all music and method books
 - All reeds, oil, cork grease, etc. to keep instrument in playable condition for the duration of the rehearsal
 - Pencil
 - Positive attitude
5. Students should conform to the rehearsal and performance routines, policies, and procedures explained by the director.
6. Students should take all suggestions and constructive criticism in the proper spirit with a positive attitude. Remember: If at first you don't succeed, try, try again!
7. Members of performing ensembles will be responsible for acquiring uniform items that match and compliment the group. The uniform will need to be worn in its entirety in public (shirts buttoned and tucked in, etc.) Our appearance at a public performance indicates the level of pride we have in our band.
8. Students should show proper care and respect for the band facility and all band property. Each band member is to do his/her share in helping to keep the band room neat and clean. Band members should get permission from the director before handling any electronic equipment, percussion equipment, or instrument other than their own.
9. All students should take care to abide by all Blythewood Middle School rules and Richland School District Two policies.

10. Students should always have a clear understanding as to what is expected of them. If in doubt, students should never be timid or afraid to ask for clarification.

Procedures for Entering the Band Room

1. Upon entering the band room, drop off any signed forms, permission slips, or notes from parents in the designated box.
2. Bring your instrument in its case to your assigned seat. (Larger instruments such as tuba, baritones, trombones, baritone sax, and bass clarinet will need to remove their instruments from the case before proceeding to their assigned seat.) **DO NOT SOCIALIZE IN THE INSTRUMENT STORAGE AREA!!!**
3. Assemble your instrument. **DO NOT PLAY.**
4. Check the board for the daily rehearsal plan and make sure you have all necessary music and materials.

Rehearsal Procedures

1. Watch for the director to begin rehearsal. At that moment, you should be silent and ready with eyes and ears to receive instructions.
2. **During the rehearsal, there is to be no talking or extraneous noise.** If you have a question or would like to speak, raise your hand and wait for permission from the director.
3. Always do your best to perform with the highest musical integrity. As musicians, we are only as good as our last performance.
4. Always be encouraging and supportive of your fellow band members. We are all on the same team and our words and actions should reflect such.

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

Consequences for inappropriate behavior will be:

- 1st Offense - Verbal warning
- 2nd Offense – Conference with director and/or Parent contact
- 3rd Offense – Parent conference and/or detention
- 4th Offense – Referral to Administration
- 5th Offense – Removal from the band program

Severe Clause - In all grades, severe or habitual misbehavior may result in ineligibility for concerts, field trips, and other special events/activities. Extreme discipline problems will warrant automatic referral to the administration.

Students who come to class without their materials, or cause extreme disruptions for a significant portion of the semester will be asked to drop band beginning the following semester. Being unprepared for or disruptive during class destroys student progress and hinders the progress of the rest of the class.

Concert Etiquette

1. Dress nicely for all live performances.
2. Arrive at a concert ten to fifteen minutes early. If you are late, wait until you hear applause before entering the concert area to find a seat.
3. Clap when the conductor comes onto the stage. This is a sign of welcome to the musicians.
4. Be quiet and attentive during the performance.
5. Do not bring food, drinks, or gum into a concert area.

6. Clap only at the end of an entire selection. If there are movements within a selection, wait until the conductor turns around and faces the audience before applauding.
7. In a jazz concert, clap at the end of each song AND at the end of each solo.
8. Please never leave a performance until the entire program is complete. This is disrespectful to the other performers. Plan to make the concert night an evening to relax and enjoy the performance(s).

Grading System

Students will be graded based on pass-offs, theory assignments, rehearsal and performance attendance and participation, and other teacher-made assignments. On some assignments, the student may have the opportunity to re-submit the work to improve the grade received. The break-down for grading will be based on the following scale:

- 25% Concert and Rehearsal Attendance/ Participation
(Failure to participate without a valid excuse results in a “zero” for concert grade.)
- 25% Class Participation
(attentive, asking/answering questions, good posture, etc.)
- 25% Individual Performance
(playing tests on scales, concert music, sight-reading, rhythmic exercises, written tests)
- 25% Homework
(includes any written materials, practice records, and signed parent communication)

Chair Placement/Pass-Off

Chair placement will be determined according to pass-offs and playing tests. Students who are disruptive during a rehearsal may be demoted within their section due to behavior issues. Chair placement is completely independent of a student’s nine-weeks grade.

Performing Groups

BEGINNING BAND (All 6th Grade Band Students)

Comprised of all 6th Grade band students. This group will be performing 2 times during the school year.

SEVENTH GRADE BAND

All seventh grade band students will be members of this ensemble, unless otherwise notified by the director. This group will perform 3 times during the school year. In order to adequately prepare for these performances, after-school rehearsal time is necessary. A schedule of these rehearsal times will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Unexcused absence or tardiness will lower a student’s grade and is grounds for removal from the ensemble. Behavior from the members of this group **MUST BE EXEMPLARY**. This group will perform at school concerts and graduation.

EIGHTH GRADE BAND/SYMPHONIC BAND

All eighth grade band students will be members of this ensemble, unless otherwise notified by the director. In the spring, this ensemble will be open to select seventh grade students as well. Placement in the spring ensemble is based on an audition in December. This group will perform 4 times during the school year. In order to adequately prepare for these performances, after-school rehearsal time is necessary. A schedule of these rehearsal times will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Unexcused absence or tardiness will lower a student’s grade and is grounds for removal from the ensemble. Behavior from the members of this group **MUST BE EXEMPLARY**. This group will perform at school concerts, SCBDA Junior Concert Band Festival, and participate in the Winter Camp. Members of this ensemble are required

to audition for Region Band, as well as perform at Solo & Ensemble. This ensemble may also be called upon to perform at various school functions.

Instrument Rental

Students using school-owned instruments will be held responsible for the maintenance and repair of that equipment. Students will also be held liable for instruments damaged through abuse, neglect or horseplay. Rental contracts will be issued for all school owned instruments. School-owned instruments available for rental include oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, French horn, euphonium, and tuba. The rental fee for school owned wind instruments is **\$50** per year.

Percussion students have an annual fee of **\$25** for the use of school owned percussion instruments. This fee is due at the beginning of the year and covers wear and tear on the band percussion instruments, specialty mallets, and replacement costs of percussion heads due to normal wear and tear.

Instrument Storage

Each student will be assigned a storage place for her/his instrument. It is the student's responsibility to store his/her property in the correct location. Any student wishing to store their personal instrument in the band room should have her/his name clearly marked on a tag on the outside of the instrument case. Please be mindful, if a student leaves his/her instrument in the storage room, they are leaving it at their own risk. Neither Blythewood Middle School nor Richland School District Two will accept responsibility for any damage or theft of any instrument left in a storage room.

Lost or Stolen Instruments

Neither the band program, the band booster, the school district, nor the director is responsible for student-owned or rented instruments and materials that are lost or stolen. Each parent and student is responsible for recording the instrument's serial number at home, and each student is responsible for making sure his or her instrument is always taken home at the end of the school day. Parents who rent their child's instrument from a music store or from the school instrument inventory are strongly encouraged to purchase insurance on the instrument. Parents who purchase an instrument are recommended to check with their homeowner's insurance policy regarding potential loss or theft of that instrument during the school day.

If an instrument is lost or stolen:

1. Obtain the make, model, and serial number of the instrument.
2. Determine where your child last saw the instrument.
3. Contact the director immediately.
4. Upon teacher request, file a police report.

Broken Instrument Policy

If your instrument is broken, you need a note from a parent indicating the music store and date you took it to get repaired. The band director reserves the right to call and verify this with the music store. **PLEASE KEEP YOUR INSTRUMENT MOUTHPIECE-** The director may have a loaner instrument for you to use with your mouthpiece until yours has been repaired. If no loaner is available, you are required to follow along quietly with the band during class. You are **NOT** permitted to do homework for another class. Failure to follow along quietly will result in a grade reduction and disciplinary action.

Band Uniforms/Personal Appearance

General Uniform Rules and Guidelines:

- Uniforms are to be neatly pressed and clean for each performance..
- No jewelry is to be worn with the uniform, other than discreet, stud-type earrings for young ladies.
- Under no circumstances are any colors of tennis shoes, including black, considered appropriate. Brown dress shoes are not a suitable substitute!

6th Grade Band members: Sunday dress (Males – shirt, tie, and shoes; Females – dress or pants suit)

7th and 8th Grade Males: Tux shirt, black **vest**, black bow-tie, black slacks, black dress shoes, and black socks (absolutely NO sneakers)

7th and 8th Grade Females: Tux shirt, black bow tie, black **vest**, black pants and black shoes (low heel or no heel), and black hosiery

OR

black dress/gown (must cover shoulders and go past knees)

OR

black dress top, black dress pants, black shoes, and black hosiery

Students wearing the tux shirt, black bow-tie, and **vest** will have to purchase them. I will send home additional information regarding fitting times and cost of the vests. Students out of uniform WILL NOT PERFORM concerts at school or other venues. THEY ARE UNPREPARED.

Attendance

It is expected that all students enrolled in a band class attend all concerts and after-school rehearsals. An unexcused absence from concerts or after-school rehearsals will result in a test grade of a zero. Excused absences are defined as personal illness, death in the family, or any circumstance that the director excuses **prior** to the rehearsal or concert.

For ALL absences, the following procedure must be followed by the student and parent:

- Director must be notified in advance of the absence.
- A written absentee request must be on file.
- For an absence due to illness, a parent note or doctor's excuse must be submitted
- Although cleared by the school office, absences from a band activity that same day must be cleared with the director as well – please call the band room.
- In extreme cases, a phone message may be left on the band answering machine, **with** a follow-up personal call.
- Follow-up is the sole responsibility of the student!

Every effort should be made to make medical appointments at times not in conflict with the band rehearsal schedule, as the absence of one band member affects the entire group.

The mere filing of an absentee request form does not constitute whether an absence is excused. The above policy is cut and dry in regards to what is excused. Please do not call and request that an absence be excused if it does not fall within these guidelines.

Rehearsal Attendance

1. Rehearsals will be held on campus at Blythewood Middle School. An occasional rehearsal will be held elsewhere with adequate notification given so transportation can be arranged.
2. Band members are expected to be prompt to all rehearsals and performances. **Early is on time, on time is late.** Rehearsals will start on time. Unexcused tardiness will result in a reduction of grade.

3. Band members are expected to be present for rehearsal if they are present for school. Please arrange other important appointments around the rehearsal schedule.
4. Close attention must be paid to both written and oral instructions concerning the time and date of rehearsals and performances.
5. Parents are expected to pick up their child promptly after each rehearsal or concert. Parents who are running 10 minutes late, or who have an emergency, should contact Ms. Tate so that she may be made award of the situation.

Blythewood Middle School Outstanding Musician Award

The Blythewood Middle School Outstanding Musician Award (OMA) is the most prestigious award given by the Blythewood Middle School Band Program. In order to receive the OMA, a student must perform at the highest levels of achievement throughout the entire year. Requirements for the OMA are:

1. Maintain an “A” average in band for each grading period, AND...
2. Attend ALL Band performances, AND...
3. Score a minimum of 20 points from the chart below:

• Region Band (Concert) or Alternate	3 pts.
• Region Band (Symphonic) or All State Alternate	5 pts.
• All-State Band	7 pts.
• Solo & Ensemble Excellent Rating	3 pts.
• Solo & Ensemble Superior Rating	5 pts.
• Concert Festival Excellent Rating	5 pts.
• Concert Festival Superior Rating	7 pts.
• Band Volunteer Merit	max. 3 pts/3 hours

Students only receive points for either Region or All-State bands, not both. Also, Students only receive points for one Solo & Ensemble event, regardless of the number of events entered. The Band Volunteer Merit System is exactly that – your student receives points towards Honor Band when your family volunteers a minimum of 3 hours in service to the band. No partial credit is given; a minimum of 3 hours is required to gain these points. Honor Band students will be recognized at the Blythewood Middle School Awards Day.

Regional Performance Opportunities and Events

REGION BAND (7th and 8th Graders)

The Region Band is a group of students selected by audition from the Midlands of South Carolina. The event involves an all-day Friday and Saturday morning rehearsal. Students are responsible for their own meal expenses and transportation to the event. The event culminates in a concert on Saturday afternoon at Fort Mill High School. Participation is an honor and a responsibility. **Students are expected to participate if they achieve membership. If a student auditions and becomes a member of the Region Band, he/she must fulfill the obligations of membership in the honor band. Failure to do so will eliminate the student’s ability to participate in the following year’s event.**

ALL-STATE BAND (7th and 8th Graders)

The All-State Band is a group of students selected by audition from all over South Carolina. Transportation to the audition is the responsibility of the student, although carpools can be arranged. The event requires the student to miss one Friday of classes and stay three nights at the event location. Students are responsible for their own meal expenses with travel and lodging being subsidized by the Band Booster budget. The event culminates in a concert on Sunday afternoon at Furman University that is open to the public. Participation

is an honor and a responsibility. This is the highest honor band a student can reach in the State of South Carolina. **Students are expected to participate if they achieve membership. If a student auditions and becomes a member of the Region Band, he/she must fulfill the obligations of membership in the honor band. Failure to do so will eliminate the student's ability to participate in the following year's event.**

SOLO & ENSEMBLE (open to all students)

Solo & Ensemble will be held at a school in the Midlands of South Carolina. Students may play solos and ensembles for ratings and earn medals. Solos published with a written accompaniment **MUST** be accompanied. Students are responsible for their own transportation, entry fees, and accompanist. A list of accompanists will be available second semester. Registration forms will be distributed in the second semester.

CONCERT FESTIVAL (Symphonic Band)

This is an event where bands are evaluated based on their live performance of prepared music and sight-reading. The South Carolina Band Director's Association sponsors Concert Festival and attendance is required for all students who are members of the Symphonic Band. Transportation and fees are provided by the Band Boosters. Meals, if necessary, are the students' responsibility.

Band Fees

Most of the cost of running a quality band program is not covered by the county, school budget, or the school-required band fee. As with all aspects of school budgets, needs and desires exceed the provided resources. Fundraising is the only way to meet the budgetary needs of a successful band program. Only if parents and others support the school program and the Band Boosters will the bands have the optimal conditions to become the consistently superior groups they can be. In order to ensure a more equal responsibility for the finances of the band program, we call for each student to raise at least \$100.00 in profit. Traditional fundraising activities are designed to be the source of this revenue. While parents are welcome to pay that amount, we encourage students to participate in the fundraisers as it will help them to develop a sense of ownership and pride in the Blythewood Middle School Band program.

Class Materials

SIXTH GRADE

Instrument with appropriate accessories *Please WAIT to purchase or rent
Standard of Excellence - Book 1 Enhanced (for appropriate instrument) *Please WAIT to purchase
Master Theory - Book 1 (provided)
Metronome (suggested purchase) *There is an online metronome at www.metronomeonline.com.
Luggage Tag to mark instrument case
1" Black Three Ring Binder
At least 10 plastic sheet protectors
Pencil (in class every day)

SEVENTH GRADE

Instrument with appropriate accessories
Standard of Excellence - Book 2 Enhanced (for appropriate instrument)
Standard of Excellence - Book 1 (for appropriate instrument)
Master Theory - Book 1
Metronome
Tuner (suggested purchase)
Luggage Tag to mark instrument case
1" Black Three Ring Binder
At least 10 plastic sheet protectors
Pencil (in class every day)

EIGHTH GRADE

Instrument with appropriate accessories
Standard of Excellence - Book 2 (for appropriate instrument)
Foundations for Superior Performance (for appropriate instrument)
Metronome
Tuner
Luggage Tag to mark instrument case
1" Black Three Ring Binder
At least 10 plastic sheet protectors
Pencil (in class every day)

Sheet music will be issued to students throughout the school year. If a student is absent, he or she is responsible for obtaining a copy of the music from the director, or their section leader before the next rehearsal. Sheet music should be placed in a plastic sheet protector before being placed in the student's binder.

Local Music Stores

This list of Local Music Stores is here for your convenience. Before you head to one of the area music stores, it's a good idea to give a call first to see if they have what you need. If not, they can order it for you, and you will have just saved yourself the unnecessary trip. Most orders arrive in a very reasonable amount of time -- usually in just a few days.

Music & Arts Center

Columbia Plaza
7201-C Parklane Road (near
Columbia Mall)
Columbia, SC 29223
(803) 622-4910
www.musicarts.com

Pecknel Music Company

732 Saluda Avenue at 5
Points
Columbia, SC 29205
(803) 7999-6860
www.pecknelmusic.com

STAR MUSIC

9810 Two Notch Rd # B
Columbia, SC 29223
(803) 699-5200
<http://www.starmusicsc.com/>

Private Lessons

Private lessons should be considered for all students. A class setting with large numbers of students has limitations on the amount of information each student can learn about their own playing progress. As one might expect, private lessons on a musical instrument are the best way to improve performance skills. The one-on-one approach allows the student to benefit from the individual attention as opposed to a teacher monitoring a class of over 40 students. **A recent survey of students in the South Carolina All-State Band revealed that 80% of those students in the ensemble studied privately.** Simply put, private lessons work! The Columbia area has numerous trained musicians who are available to teach private lessons to students of any age or ability. Ms. Tate will send home a preferred instructors list to all students.



Blythewood Middle School Band Program

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

1. Show an interest in the music study of your child.
2. Arrange a regular time (appointment) for him/her to practice.
3. Find a quiet place where he/she can practice without interruptions. (Provide a straight-backed chair, a music stand, and a metronome.)
4. Help the student keep a DAILY RECORD of practicing.
5. Come up with a reward system for DAILY practice
6. Provide a safe place in which to keep the instrument.
7. Keep the instrument in good repair with needed supplies in the case.
8. Help your child be very careful with instruments, repair costs are high!
9. Teach the importance of being prepared and on time for rehearsals, performances, classes, and lessons.
10. Make faithful attendance at all band activities a priority. (Children tend to value what adults value by example.)
11. Encourage him/her to play for others when opportunities arise in the e, church, school and community.
- 12. PROVIDE PRIVATE INSTRUCTION WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE SPECIALIST IN OUR AREA!**
13. See that he/she takes the instrument and materials to school every day and brings them home every day.
14. Discuss with the band director anything that might help her to understand your child.
15. Buy your child a personal planner in which he/she can put event and project dates.
16. Keep the Handbook in a safe place and refer to it often.
17. Notify the director as soon as possible if your child is to be absent from rehearsals or lessons.
18. See that he/she keeps up with academic studies.
19. Visit rehearsals occasionally.
20. Attend booster meetings, concerts, recitals and any other activities.
21. Turn in fundraising money and orders on time.
- 22. Be a positive, encouraging force in the musical growth of your child.**



Blythewood Middle School Band Program
BAND BOOSTER ORGANIZATION

The Blythewood Middle School Band Boosters is an organization of parents and friends of the Blythewood Band who are dedicated to the success and growth of the Blythewood Middle School Band Program and its students. The purpose of the Band Boosters is to provide financial and physical support to the Blythewood Band, its students, and the directors. It is not a policy-making organization. There will be several opportunities to join our band booster organization. GET INVOLVED!!!

2009-2010 Executive Officers

President:

Wanda Thompson
(wthomps8@csc.com)

Vice-President:

Debbie Barthe
(barthed@scsenate.org)

Treasurer:

Patricia Jackson
(Pjackson43@sc.rr.com)

Secretary:

Tami Covert
(tcovert@richland2.org)

“A successful band program is the result of a dedicated Band Director supported by a hard-working booster club. The BMS band boosters are a group of dedicated parents who are fueled by a desire to see our students perform at their best.”

Randy Wilson

Past President - Booster Club



Blythewood Middle School Band Program STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

_____ First Letter of Last Name

Student:

I have completely read the Blythewood Middle School Band Handbook. I understand and agree that I will follow each rule outlined in the handbook, including those on classroom and rehearsal behavior, after-school rehearsals, and concerts. I understand that my contribution to the band is an important part of the ensemble's success. I understand that if I miss an after-school rehearsal or band concert that my grade and my participation in the ensemble will be affected, unless that absence has been excused.

Student's Name _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent:

I have completely read the Blythewood Middle School Band Handbook. I understand that my child is expected to follow each rule outlined in the handbook, including those on classroom behavior, rehearsal behavior, after-school rehearsals, and concerts. I understand that my child's contribution to the band is an important part of the ensemble's success. I understand that if my child misses an after school rehearsal or band concert that his or her grade and participation in the ensemble will be affected, unless that absence has been excused. I also agree to pick up my child **no later than 10 minutes after the rehearsal has ended**, and that if I am going to be late, I will telephone Ms. Tate so that she may be made aware of the situation. I am also aware that my family has a financial obligation to the band program.

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

.....

Parents,

In an effort to better communicate with you all, I am asking that each family provide a parent e-mail address that is checked frequently. Once I have created a list for group e-mails, I will start sending reminders for parents and band students. I hope this form of communication will better serve our band program as it grows to its largest membership ever.

Please legibly print your e-mail address on the line below.
