

Holmes Bands

6th Grade Band
2008 - 2009

H A N D B O O K



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Director

hmsbands.org

A guide for the 6th Grade Band at Holmes Middle School.

HOLMES MIDDLE SCHOOL 6TH GRADE BAND HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION, GOALS, AND PHILOSOPHY

The Holmes Middle School band program is an active program dedicated to giving students the opportunity to grow musically, socially, and academically. Through musical performance, students learn how to perform and appreciate music of a variety of styles and levels of difficulty. Through group involvement students learn how to work together to achieve common goals and develop group discipline and respect for fellow students. Students learn to focus on goals and achievements that are more than personal as well as develop self-discipline. Through study of harmony, scales, rhythms, etc., students develop skills that will allow them to truly understand and appreciate the foundation of music as well as the aesthetics.

Our desire to have a successful musical experience for each student requires that both the student and parent thoroughly understand the department's purpose, goals, and the framework in which these goals will be attained. Music is a discipline and an area of knowledge important in itself. Our purpose is to develop this musical knowledge, which will lead to a natural form of self-expression through participation in the band and performance on a musical instrument.

Students play a variety of music from classical to jazz and popular literature. Emphasis is placed on the development of fundamental skills related to posture, breathing, embouchure, fingerings, counting, music reading, and overall tone production. Through scales, rhythm exercises, and etudes, students will develop the skills needed to perform band literature designed for the middle school band. *Daily practice is a must and private instruction is strongly recommended.*

6th GRADE BAND UNIFORM

In order for our bands to look as good as they sound, we require the students to wear a specified uniform for all performances. With help from parents, we can ensure that all students are properly dressed.

Boys

- White, long-sleeved, shirt
 - No logos or pictures
 - Tucked in
- Black pants
- Black shoes
- Black socks

Girls

- White blouse or shirt
 - No logos or pictures
- Black pants
- Black shoes
- Black socks

ABSOLUTELY NO STUDENTS MAY WEAR GYM SHOES, JEANS OR WHITE SOCKS!

**STUDENTS WHO DO NOT WEAR THE REQUIRED UNIFORM
MAY BE ASKED NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONCERT.**

ABOUT THE 6TH GRADE BAND

The Sixth Grade Band is comprised of all sixth grade students at Holmes Middle School that completed their first year with the Beginning Band. Students will start their group lessons, similar to those they had in fifth grade, at the beginning of September. These lessons will be taught **during the school day**, once each week. Lesson times will rotate from week to week, so they do not miss the same class two weeks in a row.

The Sixth Grade Band has early morning rehearsals **two times** every week. These rehearsals will be on **Mondays** and **Wednesdays**, starting at 7:30 in the large gymnasium at Holmes Middle School. There will be activity buses that can pick up your child, similar to last year.

The Sixth Grade Band will perform at three concerts throughout the year.

ABOUT THE WEEKLY LESSONS

All students receive one weekly, small-group lesson, which meets *during* the school day. Students are excused for academic classes for their lessons, however they are responsible for all the work from their class. Lessons rotate throughout the day from week to week to insure that the students do not miss the same class more than twice during each grading period.

Students are REQUIRED to attend all lessons. The classroom teachers will notify Mr. Itzkowitz if a specific student needs to remain in his or her class. The student will then be asked to make up his or her lesson at another time, recommended by Mr. Itzkowitz. If no times are available for a make-up lesson, Mr. Itzkowitz may assign an alternative assignment to receive credit for the lesson.

A student who forgets to come to his or her lesson or does not have his or her instrument will be marked as having an “unexcused” absence. If the student is not in school, he or she will be marked as “excused,” but will still have to make up the credit for the lesson, as determined by Mr. Itzkowitz or Mr. Budrow.

After every concert, students will receive a new copy of the lesson schedule, which will list exactly when and where the students will have their weekly lessons. It will also display other important information regarding reminders for parents. These schedules are also posted in each of the classrooms as well as directly outside the lesson rooms in the elementary schools.

BELOW IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT THE LESSON SCHEDULE LOOKS LIKE:

BAND LESSONS AT WHITMAN ELEMENTA

<i>LEAVE CLASS AT:</i>	9:25	9:55	10:25	10:55	11:25	12:55
LESSON STARTS:	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	1:00
9/4 - TUE	A	B	C	D	E	F
9/10 - MON	F	A	B	C	D	E
9/17 - MON	E	F	A	B	C	D
9/24 - MON	D	E	F	A	B	C

ABOUT THE EARLY MORNING REHEARSALS

Early morning rehearsals (7:30am) are an extremely important part of the Holmes Bands. All groups have early morning rehearsals. Early morning rehearsals will be on Mondays and Wednesdays throughout the year.

“PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE”

Practice is very important in order to achieve greatness at anything, and Band is exactly the same way! If you want to get better at something, you have to practice it. Throughout the year, students will receive different exercises and scales, in addition to their band songs, that they will need to practice consistently. They will receive practice charts that they are to fill out. These practice charts will be counted as extra credit.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The majority of materials that students will need for their first year in band have been acquired at the Band Registration Night earlier this year. Those items are as follows:

- Essential Elements 2000 Book 2 (for your instrument)
- Instrument-Specific Materials, such as reeds, cork grease, valve oil, instrument cleaning swabs, etc. will be given at the Registration Night, but are items that will need to be replaced throughout the year because of use by the student.
 - If your student needs new materials, please download a “Supply Order Form” from the FORMS page of the Holmes Band Website.

SCHOOL INSTRUMENT USE

Instruments provided by the school for student use require a certain level of maintenance and care. All students who use these school-provided instruments will be required to pay a fee, as determined by Mr. Itzkowitz or Mr. Budrow, before they can take the instrument home. This fee will cover the basic maintenance the instrument will need throughout the year. Students will be responsible for acquiring their own materials, such as books, reeds, etc. Students renting instruments from HMS will receive a written contract.

DROP POLICY

Occasionally, students may realize that they do not wish to continue playing with the group or find the extra demand on their time more than they had anticipated. Students are allowed to drop band only during the specified drop period each trimester. The official drop periods for the 2008 – 2009 school year are as follows:

1st Trimester:	August 26 - September 2
2nd Trimester:	November 25 - December 5
3rd Trimester:	March 9 - March 13

To drop band, students must obtain a drop request form from Mr. Itzkowitz and collect the required signatures. Hand written notes are NOT acceptable. Students must attend band until all the proper approvals have been obtained and all the required paperwork has been completed.

TESTS AND QUIZZES

Many weeks, in the student's weekly lesson, the student will have a quiz over certain exercises or songs that they have been asked to learn. Before each concert, the students will have a playing test, during which they will have to play their songs they have prepared for the upcoming concert.

GRADES

Grades will be based on individual achievement by Mr. Itzkowitz. **HMS Band grades are a part of the school report card.** They will be assigned as follows:

Class Participation **50%**
(Having a pencil, all books, and attendance at rehearsals and performances)

Tests / Assignments **50%**
(Theory assignments, playing tests, scale tests, etc.)

Students may receive EXTRA CREDIT by attending concerts, musicals, or other performances throughout the year. To receive extra credit, students must hand in a program from the performance.

Students may also receive EXTRA CREDIT by volunteering throughout the year, doing various tasks such as organizing music, helping out at 5th grade band early morning rehearsals, etc. Opportunities are available through Mr. Itzkowitz.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with parents is extremely important to Mr. Itzkowitz and Mr. Budrow. We would like to get to know each parent and would like for parents to feel comfortable enough with us that you call, write, or e-mail us with concerns or questions. The following are ways in which we may be contacted:

Holmes Band Office: (847) 520-2821
Mr. Bryan Itzkowitz: bitzkowi@ccsd21.org

Each week, we send out an electronic newsletter with up-to-date calendars and other various information that parents and students need to know. We encourage all students and parents to sign up for this newsletter by going to our website, **<http://www.hmsbands.org>**, and clicking on the link at the top of the page.

If you would like to schedule an appointment with Mr. Itzkowitz, please contact him using the above contact information.