

NORTHWEST MIDDLE SCHOOL BANDS

THE 2015-2016 BAND HANDBOOK



**DIRECTOR:
JAKE MITCHELL, NORTHWEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

<http://teachers.greenville.k12.sc.us/sites/jmitchell>

Northwest Middle School Bands

Northwest Middle School
1606 Geer Highway
Travelers Rest, SC 29690
864-355-6900 (main office)
864-355-6952 (band office)

Dear Band Students and Parents,

My name is Jake Mitchell, and I am very excited to be working with returning members, new members, and parents of the Northwest Middle School Band Program as we begin the 2015-2016 school year! The purpose of this handbook is to serve as an operational guide for the band program. Anytime a question arises, directors, students, and parents should refer to the handbook first for answers. If a question still exists, please feel free to contact me at any time. I know that together we can create a band family that is organized, friendly, and successful.

I. Directors and Staff

Jake Mitchell, Director of Bands, Northwest Middle School
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Carl Wylie, Director of Bands, Travelers Rest High School
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II. Expectations of a NWMS Band Member

Being a member of the Northwest Bands is a privilege that should not be taken lightly. This membership comes with GREAT rewards and great responsibility. Northwest Bands have a reputation for excellence in music performance as well as character and discipline. It is for these reasons that we follow a strict code of conduct.

In Rehearsal:

- Members will be quiet, attentive, and focused. Without discipline, there can be no learning.
- Members will maintain their instruments. (instruments in working order, have good reeds, oiled valves, lubed slides)
- Members will have necessary materials. (instrument, maintenance supplies, all assigned music and supplements, pencil)
- Members will attend all rehearsals

On Trips:

- Members will adhere to all Greenville County School District and Northwest Middle School rules.
- Members must display the highest respect for band parents and others serving as chaperones.
- Members will conduct themselves in the highest manner while representing our district, school, and band program. The dignity and decorum of the events we attend will be first and foremost in the minds of the staff, parents, and students.

Other Responsibilities:

- Members will commit themselves to improving their musical skills by practicing the fundamentals of their respective instrument, learning assigned music, and seeking opportunities to perform. (for family and friends, in church, for extracurricular band events)
- Members will commit themselves to encouraging their colleagues in the band by providing positive examples to younger students and mentoring younger students through positive, constructive feedback.
- Members will, at all times, in all places, maintain a positive attitude about the Northwest Bands.
- Members will conduct themselves in all situations with the knowledge that they are a part of the Northwest Bands, an honor that demands high caliber achievement and behavior. This applies to all situations in and out of the band room. (in other classes, at lunch with friends, etc.)

III. Helpful Ideas for a NWMS Band Parent

As a band parent, you are a key element in your child's success in music. Here are a few guidelines that will help you help your child.

- Encourage your child to play for you, your family, and your friends.
- Listen to your child practice and acknowledge improvement.
- View practice as band "homework". Treat it like you would any other subject.
- Make sure your child's instrument is always in good working order.

IV. Concert Etiquette

Throughout the year, the Northwest Bands will present school concerts, attend the state concert festival, and participate in other performances. Giving a performance takes countless hours of individual practice and very hard work in rehearsal. These activities strengthen a student's musical skills, but there are several other aspects to being a great musician. One of them is learning about concert etiquette. Please review these etiquette points with your child, and we hope that all parents and other audience members will serve as great examples for the students.

- Be seated prior to the start of the program.
- If entering or leaving the concert after the program has begun, do so only during applause or when the performers are changing positions.

- Remain quiet during the performance. Talking, whispering, and noises produced by candy wrappers or paper will be distracting to others. Infants who become "unhappy" or young children who become disorderly should be removed from the concert atmosphere.
- Stay and enjoy the entire program. All the performers have devoted many hours to producing a great musical performance. Even if your child has finished his or her portion of the program, please remain seated while the other students perform. An essential part of creating a strong and unified band program involves supporting all the students who participate in band, not just a few.
- Thunderous applause should follow each piece. The students will work very hard, the music will be enjoyable, and you will enjoy seeing and hearing your child create a great product, so show them how much you appreciate it.

V. Grading Components (District Policy)

Procedures Used to Record Student Progress (District Policy)

Major Assessments 50%

- Concert performances (required performance = required attendance)

Minor Assessments 50%

- In class playing tests and any writing-based evaluations

Grades will be entered into Power School, a web-based grading and attendance program. A hard copy of this grade book will be kept as well. Progress reports and report cards will be given.

VI. Rules and Expectations

1. Speak only with permission
2. **Bring your instrument every single day, unless instructed not to do so by Mr. Mitchell!** Everyone makes mistakes, and I am very understanding of students who forget once. If the instrument is left at home multiple times, I will make parent contacts and the student's participation grade will be affected. Please help your child remember to bring their instrument.
3. Play instrument only with permission (no playing before group warm up)
4. Reeds and mouthpieces should be the only things in students' mouths. Gum, candy, etc. are not permitted in the band room. Water is the only liquid permitted in the band room.

5. Touch only what you own or have been given permission by Mr. Mitchell to touch.

Discipline Procedures

1. Verbal warning
2. Student/Teacher Conference and phone call home
3. Lunch Detention
4. After School Detention
5. Referral to Administrator

VII. All the Extras

That which follows is a list of extra activities for band students to be involved in with a brief explanation of each one. These "extras" are what transform an average band student into a great musician.

- Private Lessons- There are several great private lesson teachers in the area for each instrument. This is the way to really get ahead. Contact Mr. Mitchell for more information.

- All-County, All-Region, All-State Honor Bands- These bands are auditioned bands comprised of some of the finest musicians in the state. Students will receive more details as the auditions are approaching.

- Solo and Ensemble - This is a student favorite. Whether it is a saxophone solo or a trombone trio, students perform a piece or pieces of their choice for a judge. Ratings are received, and students might walk away with a certificate or even a medal.

Parent / Student Information and Signature Page

(Please sign and return to Mr. Mitchell)

Student Name

(printed): _____ Grade: _____

I have read and understand all the information in the 2015-2016 NWMS Band Handbook and Syllabus (on website). I will uphold the rules and responsibilities of being a NWMS Band member.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone Number: _____

Parent Name (printed): _____

I have read and understand all the information in the 2015-2016 NWMS Band Handbook and Syllabus (on website). I will help my child uphold the rules and responsibilities of being a NWMS Band member and strive to do my part in encouraging their musical development.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone Number: _____