



# ***CHESTATEE MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND***

**Parent/Student Band Handbook  
2008-2009 School Year**

***Terry Sleister***  
**Director of Bands**

Chestatee Middle School  
2740 Fran Mar Road  
Gainesville, GA 30506

Phone: (770) 297-6270 ext.1137  
Email: [Terry.Sleister@halco.org](mailto:Terry.Sleister@halco.org)  
Web Site: [www.chestateemiddleband.com](http://www.chestateemiddleband.com)

***A Tradition of Excellence!!!!***





Welcome to the CMS Band Program,

I am very excited that you have decided to be a part of the band program here at CMS. The experiences and opportunities that you have here will be some of the greatest and most memorable of your middle school experience.

The CMS band program provides many opportunities for students to share their musical talents with others. Some of these include Large Group Performance Evaluation, All-District and All-State Honor Band, All-County Band, Solo and Ensemble Festival, as well as the many band concerts that are given here at CMS. Our band program is one that was founded on excellence and continues to be a point of pride for our school and community. In order to achieve this level of excellence and achievement, students must work hard and take pride in every aspect of being both a musician and a member of this organization.

As with any organization, there are certain policies and procedures that must be followed in order to ensure that all students have the best learning experience that our band program can offer. This handbook is designed to be an informational source for both students and parents, so please take the time to read it carefully. In doing so, you will help to ensure that all of our students grow to become the best musicians that they can be and build positive memories of their band experience that will last for many years.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns and thank you for giving me the opportunity to teach your child.

Musically yours,

Terry Sleister  
Band Director

## Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide members of the Chestatee Middle School Band Program and their parents a clear understanding of what makes up the program. This handbook is an overview, but it is also a reference source for the policies and practices of the band program. Individual questions regarding any of the stated policies and practices should be addressed to Mr. Terry Sleister, CMS Band Director.

## Program Objectives

<i><b>Educational</b></i>	To develop musicianship/performance skills and to provide a well-rounded musical background.
<i><b>Cultural</b></i>	To continue the development of music appreciation and understanding through the study and performance of various styles and genres of music.
<i><b>Service</b></i>	To support music performance and appreciation in our community through performance at certain community affairs and through programs of interest for band members, parents, fellow students, and the community.
<i><b>Social</b></i>	To provide students with an opportunity for positive social experiences, developing a sense of teamwork, and a positive emotional outlet through music performance.

## Overview of Band Course Offerings

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Beginning Band**

All students are welcome – no previous music experience is necessary. All students will try out all of the instruments in the band and will be placed on an instrument that is appropriate for them. Throughout the year, students will learn the fundamentals of music, including, but not limited to: performance techniques, music theory, composition, and music history.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Intermediate Band**

Previous experience in band or private lesson experience is necessary. Students will continue to develop the fundamentals of music introduced in sixth grade band. Extra performance opportunities are available.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Band**

Previous experience in band is necessary. Students will continue to develop musical fundamentals, with an emphasis on performance techniques. Extra performance opportunities are available.

## *Performance Opportunities*

All grade levels will give concert performances throughout the year.

There may be some extra outside of class rehearsals required for all groups in preparation for up-coming concerts.

### **District Honor Band**

Students are chosen throughout the district by auditions to perform under a well-known conductor. They will spend a weekend preparing for a wonderful concert and will receive a medal for their participation. This is a great way for students to meet other band members in our school district and make some really great music together!

### **Middle School All-State Band**

This event takes place over a weekend in May in Savannah, GA. Students are selected through a series of auditions and spend the weekend playing in a group of top-notch students from all over the state. The conductors are phenomenal and the music is fantastic! Students will receive a medal for participation in this great experience.

### **Solo and Ensemble Festival**

All band members are strongly encouraged to participate in Solo and Ensemble. Students can learn valuable musical skills by working in small ensembles and playing solos. In addition, they may choose, with some discretion by the director, with whom they wish to perform with. Some examples are duets, trios, woodwind and brass quintets, and percussion ensembles. Students perform for judges and are given ratings on their performance. Color-coded medals are given based on rating results.

### **Large Group Performance Evaluation**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are required to attend this festival. We will prepare selections from a state approved list and perform for judges who will then award ratings (superior, excellent, etc). This is an excellent form of evaluation for both students and me. The students receive a medal and the school is awarded a participation plaque that reflects the appropriate rating that the band earned from the judges.

### **Jazz Band**

Jazz Band is offered once a week after school for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade band students. Students are selected by audition for this ensemble. The jazz band performs at various functions throughout the year in addition to concert performances. This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn different genres of music and have a lot of fun in the process!

### **Percussion Ensemble**

The Percussion Ensemble is available to any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Grade percussionist that wishes to participate. It meets once a week after school and is an excellent opportunity for percussionists to improve their skills and play some challenging music that is written especially for percussion.

### **Pep Band**

Pep Band is open to any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade band student that wishes to participate. The Pep Band meets periodically after school and performs for pep rallies and some sports events. This is a great way for students to play some fun music and support our athletic program at the same time!

## ***Band Materials List***



### **All students will need:**

- 1 inch black binder with pockets
- Page protectors for music in binder
- Pencil with eraser
- Essential Elements 2000 method book 1 (6<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Essential Elements 2000 method book 2 (7<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Essential Technique 2000 method book (8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Instrument\*\* (if you already own or rent one)

\*\*I will go over recommendations for instrument rentals during first week of class for beginning band students

*Please note that most rental instruments come with mouthpieces and care kits when you get them. However, please ensure that you have the following just in case.*

### **Flutes**

- Cleaning rod
- Cleaning cloth

### **Clarinets**

- Recommended mouthpiece – VanDoren B45
- Cork grease
- 4 playable reeds at all times – strength 2 ½ or 3 (VanDoren is preferred)
- Reed guard – should come with mouthpiece
- Swab

### **Oboes and Bassoons**

- 2 playable reeds with case (film or pill bottle will work)
- Turkey feather (oboes only) and swab
- Cork grease

### **Saxophones**

- Recommended mouthpiece – Rousseau 4R
- 4 playable reeds – strength 3 (VanDoren is preferred)
- Reed guard – should come with mouthpiece
- Cork grease
- Swab and mouthpiece brush

### **Trumpets**

- Recommended mouthpiece – Bach 5C or 7C (any brand)
- Valve oil
- Tuning slide grease
- Metal straight mute (optional)

### **Horns**

Recommended mouthpiece – Bach 7 or 11

Rotary valve oil

Tuning slide grease

### **Trombones**

Recommended mouthpiece – Bach 6 ½ AL

Slide cream, spray bottle (I suggest Superslick slide care package)

Tuning slide grease

### **Baritone/Euphonium**

Recommended mouthpiece – Bach 6 ½ AL

Valve oil

Tuning slide grease

### **Tuba**

Recommended mouthpiece – Bach 24 AW

Valve oil

Tuning slide grease

### **Percussion**

**Snare/ mallet kit with practice pads**

\*\*Snare drum sticks size 2B, or 5B

\*\*Mallets – hard rubber or nylon

\*\*I suggest purchasing the Vic Firth EP2 kit that comes with all sticks plus a case to carry them in.

# *Chestatee Middle School Band Policies and Procedures*



*“The purpose of discipline is to shape future behavior, not to punish past behavior.”*

I do not anticipate having any major discipline problems because participating in band is a privilege and the students are here because they *want* to enjoy learning about and making music!!

## **Policies/Procedures**

### **A. Personal Conduct**

We all have rights. It is every student’s right to learn and the director’s right to teach. The following policies will hopefully ensure that everyone’s rights are preserved and protected.

1. Cooperate fully by following the director’s instructions immediately, completely, and with a good attitude!
2. Never talk when someone is on the podium.
3. Raise your hand, not your voice, when you wish to speak. Wait patiently for the director to call on you.
4. Respect the rights of others and their property. Remember the “Golden Rule??!”
5. Come into class quickly and quietly. Be seated immediately and get materials ready for class.

### **B. Rehearsal Expectations**

Because it takes a tremendous amount of practice and teamwork for a band to be successful, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines for every rehearsal.

1. Be in your seat with required materials (instrument, band folder, sheet music, method book, and pencil) on time.
2. Dispose of candy, food, or gum **BEFORE** entering the band room.
3. Do not play your instrument unless instructed to do so.
4. Use the restroom before coming to rehearsal. Students will not be permitted to leave rehearsal except in case of an emergency.
5. Be prepared for rehearsal (practice your part ahead of time).

### **C. Equipment**

All instruments and equipment at Chestatee Middle School are in good condition. I don’t think I need to tell you that musical instruments and equipment are VERY expensive. The following policies will protect the use of the equipment, so that everyone will have the best opportunity to learn. We can only have a great sounding band if our equipment is working properly.

1. We have a limited supply of larger school owned instruments (tuba, bass clarinet, etc.) that are available for student use. An Instrument Check-Out form (at the back of the handbook) must be turned in before the instrument can be taken home.
2. Respect the belongings of others. Only play on YOUR instrument.
3. Band rehearsals and home are the only places you are to play your instrument, not the bus stop, nor the school bus, nor in any other class (unless directed so by that teacher).
4. YOU are responsible for your folder, music, and books. Do not leave them behind after class. Things tend to turn up missing that way.
5. All materials must be in their proper storage areas every day after rehearsals are over before class will be dismissed. We play together as a team so we must help clean up together as a team.
6. It is your responsibility to keep your instrument in perfect working order. If you need my help with any repairs, please let me know immediately (see instrument repair section).
7. Instrument, folder, and pencil are required for class every day. Failing to bring your instrument hurts the sound of the band and will also hurt your grade.

#### **D. Music policies**

Music will be passed out to students and collected back after every performance. It is very expensive to purchase. Therefore, you are responsible for taking PERFECT care of your music. It must come back to be in the same condition that it was given to you.

1. Always write your name on the upper right hand corner of your music, method books, and folders. Your name should also be written on the inside of your binder.
2. When the director gives musical direction, write them – IN PENCIL ONLY – on your music.
3. Do not put your folder or binder in your instrument case. It can damage the keys, valves, and rods and be very expensive to fix.
4. Only YOU are responsible for your instrument and music!!

**Consequences for not following these expectations will follow the Chestatee Middle School School-Wide Discipline Policy (please refer to CMS Discipline Policy for additional information). Any students receiving numerous reprimands and/or frequently causing classroom interruptions will require a parent/teacher conference and possible removal from the band program.**

## *Grading Policy*

Grades in band are determined by the total number of points accumulated within a nine-week grading period.

<b>Participation</b>	<b>60 Points</b>
Daily participation	
Rehearsal Attendance	
Performance Attendance	
<b>Skills</b>	<b>40 Points</b>
Pass-offs and playing tests	
Written tests	
Practice records (when appropriate)	

---

### **100 Total Points**

In accordance with the Hall County grading system, achievement grades will be assigned as follows:

<b>Accumulated Points</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
Below 70	F

### **Participation Grades**

Students can earn up to 60 points in a nine-week grading period for daily class participation, rehearsal, and performance attendance. The following are the requirements for the participation grade. Please read these carefully!

#### **Daily Participation: To receive full credit, students must**

1. Have instrument in perfect working condition  
\*\*if instrument is being repaired, student must bring a note, signed by the parent, with the store name and phone number where it is being repaired. I may occasionally check students' instruments to assure that they are being properly maintained.
2. Have all materials necessary to play and care for the instrument (i.e. reeds, mallets/sticks, valve oil, etc.)
3. Have all music and method books in class
4. Have pencil

#### **Rehearsals and Performances: To receive full credit, students must**

1. Be early (if you are on time—you are late!) and ready to go
2. Have all materials
3. Be dressed appropriately

The success of the band is dependant upon the commitment and responsibility of each member. **Everyone is equally important!!** It really DOES matter when a student misses a rehearsal or performance. Conflicts with school related activities must be worked out between the director, student, and the faculty sponsor. Band is a CURRICULAR subject, not an extra-curricular activity. Thank you for understanding and upholding this policy.

### Musical Skills

Students can earn up to 40 points per nine week grading period through pass-offs, playing tests, written tests, and practice records (when appropriate).

#### **Pass-offs and playing tests**

Students will be required to pass off music at various times during each nine week period. This includes performance music, scales, technical exercises, and studies from the method books. This will ensure that adequate practice is occurring and that students are learning the music.

#### **Written tests**

Throughout the nine-week grading period, students will be tested over music history, music theory, and music reading skills.

#### **Practice records**

Students are expected to practice at home each day. Practice records will only be necessary if I find out that practice is not occurring outside of class. This will be a method of motivating practice at home for students and give parents some insight on the musical development of their child. Remember, you should practice because you want to and not because to have to.

#### **Extra Credit**

There will be ample opportunities for extra credit both in and outside of class (i.e. attending concerts outside of the school, extra pass-offs in class, composing a tune for class performance, etc.)

#### **Rehearsal and Performance Policy**

All rehearsals and performances are mandatory. Each individual is important to the success of the entire group. If an absence is necessary, a written excuse must be presented to me signed by the parents well in advance. Personal illness, death in the family, weddings, and religious holidays are usually the only excused absences allowable for performances and rehearsals. When in doubt, always check with me.

#### **Transportation**

I realize that many parents work during the day and transportation can be a problem. I am always willing to help with any problems that come up. I just ask that you let me know at least 24 hours in advance so that I can make arrangements for transportation for a student that has a problem. Not having a ride is not an acceptable excuse for missing a rehearsal or performance. Remember: **Every member is important to our band!!**

#### **Band Uniform**

I will be having Chestatee Middle School Band shirts made that students will need to purchase to wear for performances. Boys will wear black pants, black socks, and black shoes with the shirt. Girls can wear either a LONG black skirt with black hose, or black slacks with black socks, and black shoes.

## **Band Travel**

Anytime members of the band travel, they represent Chestatee Middle School. CMS has an outstanding reputation within the community and each band member is expected to help maintain that reputation by representing our school well. Any student that does not meet this expectation will face disciplinary action and/or be removed from all CMS band activities. All students that travel with the band must have a band travel form on file (see forms at the back of the handbook).

To be eligible to travel with the band, students must be able to play all of the music being performed, have paid all fees that apply to travel, have attended all school band concerts, and not have any major discipline problems. Students that do not meet these requirements may not travel with the band.

## **Travel Information**

### **Chaperone Information**

- The chaperone is an extension of the band director and should be shown proper respect and cooperation.
- It is the chaperone's duty to take care of the well being of the band.
- It is the chaperone's duty to uphold all rules, regulations, and policies of the band and of Chestatee Middle School.
- Chaperones will report any situation that conflicts with the rules, regulations, and policies to the band director.
- Chaperones will report any incidents or situations of a serious nature immediately to the band director.
- Chaperones are volunteer that are here to help.....help them by giving them your full cooperation.

### **Buses**

- Students are responsible for their own luggage and equipment. Please make sure that all personal belongings are removed the bus and put in the proper place when we unload the buses.
- All instruments must have a proper I.D. tag on them.
- Students must be in assigned seats for roll call.
- NO radios, cd players, etc. will be allowed on the buses unless they have earphones (CMS is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal items).
- Students must follow the rules that are set by each bus driver.

### **Things to Remember**

- Follow all polices and guidelines of the band and school and you will have a great time!
- Meet chaperones and bus driver at the designated time. Never trust the "he said/she said" rumors.
- Be considerate of others in our group as well as others around us.
- If you have a problem, tell a chaperone. They will be glad to assist you.
- We will have a first aid kit on hand, but please make sure that your travel, medical form is on file and all information is current.
- The band director will make all final decisions about situations concerning discipline problems.

## **Instrument Care**

It is your responsibility to make sure that your instrument is in perfect working order. Parents will be responsible for having instruments repaired when needed. An Educational Representative from The Music and Arts Center will be here weekly and either that person or I will be able to fix most minor instrument problems here at school free of charge. In the event that an instrument needs to go into the shop for repairs, parents should request a loaner instrument from the shop so that your child can still participate in band class while the instrument is being repaired.

## **Changing Instruments**

Any student that wishes to switch to another instrument must receive permission from Mr. Sleister, take private lessons, and be able to play on the same level as the rest of the band in which he/she is a member. In order to fill out proper instrumentation for the band, some students may be asked to switch to a different instrument. All instrument changes must be approved by Mr. Sleister and have parental consent.

## **Fund Raising**

Although the Hall County Board of Education provides a budget for the band program band programs are very expensive to operate. Fund raising will supplement the provided budget and enable the band program to make much needed purchases of instruments, music and equipment as well as pay for some of the costs of festival opportunities. This will help to improve the overall band experience for our students. It is my personal goal to keep fund raising to a minimum, therefore fund raising will be limited to no more than two per school year.

## **Awards**

**Band Director's Award:** Given to one 8<sup>th</sup> grade band student, determined by the director, considered to have made the greatest contribution to the Chestatee Middle School band program.

**Jazz Band Award:** Given to one member of the Jazz Band, determined by the director, considered to have made outstanding musical contribution and provided leadership within the ensemble.

**Outstanding Musician Award:** Given to one student in each section (woodwinds, brass, and percussion), determined by the director, considered to have made the greatest contribution to the Chestatee Middle School Band.

**Most Improved Award:** Given to one student in each section (woodwinds, brass, and percussion), determined by the director, considered to have made the most improvement on his/her instrument and musicianship.

## Concert Etiquette

An important part of being a musician is not only knowing how to perform but also how to attend and listen to a performance. Here are some guidelines that audiences should follow in order for all to enjoy the concert with minimal interruptions or distractions.

- Everyone should remain seated during performances. If you must leave during a performance, please exit quietly between selections. Leaving should be for emergencies only.
- There should be no talking during performances. Talking is extremely distracting to both the performers and any audience member that may be seated near you.
- Please turn off (or put in silent mode) any cell phones, beepers, etc. during a performance.
- Applaud appropriately after a performance. Yelling or shouting is not appropriate for a concert performance.
- Students need to remain throughout the entire performance of other groups as well. The best way for you to show your support for your fellow musicians is by listening to them perform.

## Helpful Hints for Parents

***Be Realistic*** Learning to play an instrument can be very difficult at first. Do not be disappointed or concerned if initial progress is slow.

***Be a Coach*** Encourage your child to “keep up the good work” and encourage routine practice at home. Establish a daily time that your child is required to practice (i.e. after dinner or after other homework is completed). Also, set up a time in which your child can perform for you what he/she has learned in class. Remember, no one becomes great at anything they do unless they practice it first.

***Support*** Try to attend all of your child’s performances as well as other types of community musical events such as high school band concerts or symphony concerts.

***Get Involved*** Parental involvement is not only welcome, but encouraged. Volunteer to chaperone a band trip or activity, come observe a band rehearsal, discuss any concerns with the director, and be your child’s best fan.

# Chestatee Middle School Band Information Sheet

Please Print

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Bus # \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only) \_\_\_\_\_

Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Serial # \_\_\_\_\_

Private Lesson Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

The following information should list the parent(s) with whom you live

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

My student and I have read the band handbook and understand all of the policies within it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

# *Chestatee Middle School Band*

## **Medical and Travel Consent Form**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Personal Physician \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student is allergic to the following medications: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student has the following allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student is authorized to carry the following medications: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Tetanus Shot: \_\_\_\_\_

Check if any of the following apply: Heart Disease\_\_\_\_, High Blood Pressure\_\_\_\_, Asthma\_\_\_\_, Seizures\_\_\_\_, Bronchitis\_\_\_\_, Diabetes\_\_\_\_, Contacts\_\_\_\_, Glasses\_\_\_\_, Dental Appliance\_\_\_\_  
Other Pertinent Information Concerning Student's Medical Condition: \_\_\_\_\_

***The Following Must Be Complete:***

All Students Should Carry Health Insurance of Some Kind! Students Without Insurance Must Provide a Signed Waiver Letter From Their Parents.
---

Health Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Policy Holder \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize Mr. Terry Sleister and whomever he may designate as assistants to seek medical attention for the student listed above. I also give my permission for this student to participate in all scheduled, school approved band trips.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Chestatee Middle School Band Instrument Check-Out Form

THIS FORM IS TO BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY AND RETURNED TO THE BAND DIRECTOR IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE SCHOOL INSTRUMENT(S) FOR USE THIS SCHOOL YEAR.

**Student Using the Instrument(s)** (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Initial

There is a \$40 per year rental fee for a school owned instrument that goes to cover repairs and upkeep for the instrument.

### THIS SECTION – BAND OFFICE USE ONLY

#### SEMESTER I

#### SEMESTER II

<i>Fee Paid</i>		
<i>Instrument</i>		
<i>Serial No.</i>		
<i>Accessories</i>		
<i>Condition of Instrument</i>		
<i>Cost of Instrument</i>		
<i>Signature of Person Documenting Instrument Condition</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Signature of Person Documenting Instrument Condition</i> <i>Date</i>

I take full responsibility for the proper use of the school instrument(s) and all accessories which I am using this year. I promise to care for the instrument(s) and accessories by following proper handling practices, by properly cleaning the instrument(s), by not lending the instrument(s) out to unauthorized people, and by complying with all requested inventory/ check-in dates and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*                      *Date*

I understand that my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ will be using the school provided instrument(s) this school year and I do hereby agree to cover any costs needed in case of loss, damage, or misuse of the school instrument(s) and accessories while in my son/daughter's care.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*                      *Date*