



Middle Creek High School Band

ANDREW B. WEISS – DIRECTOR OF BANDS

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Instrumental Music: Band

Beginner, Intermediate, Proficient & Advanced

Course Syllabus

Purpose:

The purpose of the Middle Creek High School Band Program is to educate young people through music performance. Time together will not be limited to purely learning about music, although that is the primary purpose. By involvement in this organization, students will mature as a musician, student, and as a person. The curriculum is cyclical in nature; while there is similarity from year to year, the comprehensive program encompasses four years of study. Individual development of character, esteem, teamwork, and group accomplishment can be additional rewards of the program.

Essential Standards of Music:

1. Apply the elements of music and musical techniques in order to sing and play music with accuracy and expression.
2. Interpret the sound and symbol systems of music.
3. Create music using a variety of sound and notational sources.
4. Understand the interacting elements to respond to music and music performances.
5. Understand global, interdisciplinary, and 21st century connections with music.

Course Description: 9-10/11-12 Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble

The MCHS Band classes are designed to strengthen the student's individual musicianship through the study of basic music concepts and vocabulary as well as scales and technical studies. It is also designed to strengthen ensemble musicianship through the rehearsal and performance of intermediate-level to advanced band literature. Students must demonstrate intermediate ability through performance of major, minor and chromatic scales, intermediate-level/advanced solo literature, intermediate-level/advanced band literature, and sight-reading.

The MCHS Wind Ensemble is designed for the more serious music student in mind. It builds on the fundamentals gained through prior band experience. More advanced musical concepts of harmony, rhythm, and individual technique are studied through this course. It is also designed to strengthen ensemble musicianship through rehearsal and performance of advanced-level band

literature. Students must demonstrate advanced ability through performance of major, minor, and chromatic scales, higher-level solo literature, higher-level band literature, and sight-reading.

Supplies:

- Instrument in good working condition
- All supplies related to instrument (Reeds, Valve Oil, Cork Grease etc..)
- Pencil
- Notebook, staff music paper
- Sheet music and music folder (provided)

Mouthpieces/Equipment:

All equipment and instruments are expected to be of good quality and in excellent condition. It is the responsibility of the student to take care of his/her own equipment so that it remains in good playing condition. Students are encouraged to seek information from professionals about step-up instruments. Students are also responsible for providing their own mouthpieces and ligatures. MCHS does own mouthpieces, but it is recommended that the students purchase their own. Following is a list of mouthpieces that are recommended.

Clarinet Vandoren 5RV Lyre

Bass Clarinet CM 344

Saxophone Rousseau

French Horn Holton Farkas MDC (medium-deep cup) or Yamaha 30C4

Trumpet Bach 5c or 3c

Euphonium Schilke 51d—check shank size

Trombone Bach 6 ½ AL or 5G (Advanced)—check shank size

Tuba Conn Hellberg, Schilke 66

Reed instruments should purchase quality reeds and should always have *three playable reeds that they rotate daily*. Reeds should be put in a reed case between rehearsals. This extends the life of the reed. Vandoren reeds are recommended. Rico reeds are not acceptable.

Percussionists are responsible for providing:

- Stick bag
- Snare sticks (Vic Firth SD1 Generals)
- Yarn mallets (Mike Balter, rattan shaft preferred)

- Hard plastic bell mallets (Balter)
- Timpani mallets (Vic Firth T1 Generals) *optional

Resources:

PowerSchool (online)

www.musictheory.net (for theory and ear training exercises)

<http://www.teoria.com/index.php>) for theory and ear training exercises)

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> (recording software)

The BrassBand, Quarter Note Music, Flying Squirrel, Music and Arts (for supplies and repairs)

Communication:

All email communication with Mr. Weiss should be done via his WCPSS email (aweiss@wcpss.net.) You may also call the school at (919) 773-3838. To meet in person, please schedule an appointment.

All email communication with students must be from the student's WCPSS email account. Students can set this up in the media center.

Expectations:

- Students will continually develop individual musical advancement by practicing every day. Students are also encouraged to seek a private instructor.
- Students will operate and perform as a group of disciplined young adults. Students will learn to become actively involved in all aspects of rehearsal. This means that no other work should be done during rehearsal.
- Students will establish and focus on cooperation.
- Students will be held accountable for taking care of personal and school-related instruments and equipment, including chairs, stands, and sheet music. Students will not touch instruments that do not belong to them.
- Students will consistently demonstrate group excellence with all performances.
- Students will enjoy each other's company.
- The band program will involve parents in the activities of their children.
- Members will make themselves available for rehearsals and performances held outside the school day.
- Members will attend performances of other Middle Creek fine arts programs in and out of the school day and write up written evaluations of such performances.
- Members of this group will represent Middle Creek High School to the community with professionalism.
- Everyone will do their part.

Practice Do's and Don'ts:

Do:

- ♪ Find a quiet place without distractions.
- ♪ Follow a routine:
 - ♪ Brass: Mouthpiece and free buzzing—long tones, then lip slurs (5 minutes)
 - Be sure that the pitch stays steady on long tones
 - Use lots of air, especially through sustained notes
 - Work for fast note changes on lip slurs, center on pitch
 - ♪ Long tones with dynamic changes
 - Be sure pitch stays steady as dynamic changes
 - ♪ Woodwinds: Chromatic/scale exercises
 - ♪ Play etude, solo, or melody from music or warm-ups
 - Work for phrasing, dynamics, proper breath support/tone quality
 - ♪ Articulation study/rhythms
 - ♪ Scales (all major scales and chromatic)
 - ♪ Sightread something (borrow a book from the library)
 - ♪ Practice solo piece or parts from music
 - ♪ End with your favorite thing to play
- ♪ Count yourself off in the tempo of the piece before you play.
- ♪ Practice exactly like you want to perform.
- ♪ Spread out your practice time throughout the week.

Don't:

- ♪ Spend all of your time on music that you know.
- ♪ Just play through pieces over and over. Isolate your problem areas, then run the whole piece or section.
- ♪ Practice for less than 15 minutes at a time.

Practice Tools:

- Tuner (stand alone or on your device is fine)
- Metronome (stand alone or on your device is fine)
- Recording device—listen to yourself often
- Internet—research the pieces you are playing, your instrument for pitch tendencies, alternate fingerings, tips on improving tone quality and intonation, etc.
- Mirror—be sure that there is no superfluous movement in your embouchure

Honors Band Clinics

There are several Honors Band Clinics that are available to students by audition. Mr. Weiss will distribute information as he is made aware of the events. For students that are enrolled in Honors Band classes, there are multiple ways to satisfy your honor's requirements. In the fall semester, you may audition for Honor's (All District) Band and/or in the spring, you may perform in our Solo/Small Ensemble Concert. If the students are unable to perform in one or both of these performance opportunities, performance evaluation or research papers may be written instead. In this case, prior approval must be made by Mr. Weiss.

All-District Band: All-District Band auditions are in January. Honors Band students will be required to either audition for All District Band or write 2 evaluation papers. All District Band is a great way for students to showcase their individual talent and hard work through a competitive audition and selection process. Students are also representing the MCHS Band Program. As such, proper preparation and director's approval is required. Students must complete the following requirements:

- All 8 major scales + chromatic scale checked off with Mr. Weiss
- An 'A' on Playing Tests 3 and 4 (based on the All-District solo)
- Play entire solo for Mr. Weiss
- Perform at least once for class

Students who do not complete the above requirements will not be allowed to audition.

Instrumental Music: Band - Class Grading:

35% Rehearsal Procedure/Ensemble Skills

35% Playing Tests (recorded outside of class time)

15% Performance evaluation papers

15% Classwork/Quizzes (written or in class playing quiz)

Rehearsal Procedure/Ensemble Skills - 35%

Regular (daily) practice is expected. Students should not merely strive to master the notes and rhythms of the music from class. Students should constantly work toward mastery of their instrument, and they should take the initiative to find etudes or solos outside of the normal class curriculum to master and perform. Consistently working on material inside and outside of class will improve each student as an individual musician as well as improving our ensemble sound.

Before class, students should make their way through the instrument storage room in an organized fashion. Instruments should be taken out of the cases, cases left on the shelves, and book bags and other items left in the instrument storage room on the shelving units.

During rehearsal, students are to be actively engaged at all times and perform their best effort. Students will sign a participation contract outlining specific expectations.

After rehearsal, all percussion equipment should be put away in proper places, covered, etc. Instruments should be put in cases in their proper storage areas. Chairs and stands should be left neat and orderly.

Personal items, non-band items, and trash should not be left in the band area (including storage areas). There should never be food, drinks (except bottled water), gum, candy, etc. in the band area.

Playing Tests - 35%

Evaluations will be made regularly on a student's playing ability. Students should make every attempt at a high-quality performance, focusing on improving every time that they play. Students may perform the playing test live for Mr. Weiss or they may record it to their device as a video file (this is preferred--mp3, .wav, .m4a, .mov format).

Smartphones are another method to record your playing test. Use the appropriate app, email it to yourself (so you can save it to your computer), and send it via Google Drive. Do not email your playing test as an attachment directly to Mr. Weiss. Please share a link via google drive.

Students are expected to perform for their own playing test. Record as many times as necessary in order to get an excellent recording. The final file should not be edited in any way. Stops and starts in the recording should only be done at "obvious" section breaks (multi-measure rests, between movements, etc.).

Accuracy (playing as written)

Notes

Rhythms

Articulation

Dynamics

Technique

Intonation

Tempo

Musicality

Expression/phrasing

Tone quality

Quarter projects may include performance-based evaluations and/or written evaluations (written assignments or tests). Students will get at least one month to prepare for the assignment. Examples of past projects include:

Written Project

Self- and Peer-Evaluation Projects

Movie Projects

Chamber Project (performances in class in February)

Honors Portfolio* (Wind Ensemble)

*Members of *Wind Ensemble* will complete an Honors Portfolio. At the end of each quarter, a folder must be submitted by the student with a completed Honors rubric and all required evidence of completion (see Honors rubric).

Performances evaluation papers - 25%

Performances are a large part of our class. This includes concerts, dress rehearsals and music adjudication (MPA.) The day after each performance, the class will engage in a reflective discussion regarding the performance. The students will then submit an evaluation paper based upon their performance and reflection of the performance. A rubric will be supplied to each student that outlines the format of the evaluation paper. This rubric is included at the end of this syllabus. For students that were unable to attend our performance, an alternate written assignment will be given. This alternate assignment will be at the discretion of Mr. Weiss.

If at any point a student or parent finds it impossible to attend a required event, the director should be contacted immediately. Excuses will only be given for illness, death in the immediate family, court or administrative proceedings, religious observances, or school-related activities that in the director's opinion take precedence. *Work, transportation issues, or studying for a test or completing homework are not excused absences.* A make-up assignment will be given for excused absences.

Performance Evaluation Guidelines

All written assignments should be double-spaced and Times New Roman size 12 font. You should use 1-inch margins on all four sides of the paper and it should fill all pages required by the assignment (ex. a two-page assignment should fill up two full pages). Your paper should include a Works Cited page (not included in the page count) that lists all references from the paper. As a

general rule, you should attempt to diversify your sources (in other words, do not get all of your information from one website). Wikipedia should *not* be your only accepted source.

Plagiarism is “the act of taking ideas, writings, etc. from another and offer them as one’s own” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*). Any non-quoted material in your writing assignment should be cited properly on the Works Cited page. This will be checked and strictly enforced, and an assignment with any sign of plagiarism will receive a grade of a zero and be turned in to administration.

Middle Creek High School Honor Code

Middle Creek High School is a school community that is committed to integrity and excellence in academics and in personal accountability. Because of this commitment, it is imperative that all members of the Middle Creek High School community embody personal honor, personal integrity, and personal responsibility. Therefore, it is expected that each person at Middle Creek High School will uphold the honor code including but not limited to the following:

Plagiarism and copying, cheating, discussions of material, lying and fraudulent behavior, veracity and integrity of work, etc...

Infractions for Breaking the Honor Code:

1st Infraction

- Student gets a zero with an opportunity to take an alternate assignment that they must complete within two days of the offer.
- The student will be given 60% credit for the alternate assignment.

2nd Infraction

- Student gets a zero with an opportunity to take an alternate assignment that must be completed within two days of the offer.
- The student will be given 50% credit for the alternate assignment.

3rd Infraction

- The student will receive a zero for the assignment.

Note: Infractions are added up for each individual student over ALL his/her classes, NOT for each individual class.

Classwork/Quizzes 10%

Band quizzes will be given in class on a variety of topics. These topics include and are not limited to: rhythm, sight reading, music theory, music history, dictation etc. Students will be responsible for maintaining a band notebook that we will add to each day of class. Journal entries include concepts relating to music history and theory and are crucial to the comprehension of the curriculum material. Written assessments will be derived primarily from notebook entries. Students may also be asked to complete online music theory assignments.

Students are expected to make up all missed work, *including daily journal entries. Students must initiate completion of make-up work on the first day that the student returns after being absent.* If possible, student should see the teacher before absence regarding assignments.

Additional Opportunities to Demonstrate Mastery

Students may receive supplemental points by redoing an assignment on which they received a low grade.

Middle Creek High School Band Testing Rubric

Please turn to the next few pages to see our Testing Rubric's that Mr. Weiss uses for playing tests. This includes, Winds scales, Winds solo's, Timpani, Mallet Percussion, Snare using rolls, and Snare using Rudiments.