



## Cooper Middle School Band

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**WELCOME!!!** This handbook is designed to provide you with an understanding of the musical opportunities and expectations associated with being a part of the band program. I am so excited to get to work with all of you and look forward to an amazing 2023-2024 school year. As with any class, please feel free to contact me directly with any questions or concerns that may arise.

### Course Offerings

Concert Band Woodwind Class (1<sup>st</sup> period)  
Percussion Ensemble (2<sup>th</sup> Period)  
Concert Band Brass Class (6<sup>th</sup> Period)  
Symphonic Band/Advanced I (7<sup>th</sup> Period)  
Wind Ensemble/Advanced II (8<sup>th</sup> Period)

Each band class is a full year elective for all students participating. All band classes are mixed grades and participate in concerts throughout the year. Bands may also have afterschool rehearsals throughout the year. Those dates will be sent out in a “Rehearsal Calendar” later in the year. Students in participating in any band class are expected to participate in all concerts, contests, and attend any afterschool rehearsals. For more information please reference FCPS regulations 2234, and 3866.

### Grading Policy

Many factors contribute to the success of a superior band program. Individual progress is the most important part to a student’s grade. Students’ playing experience, musical background, opportunity for private lessons and good equipment vary too widely to allow performing ability to be the main factor in determining a grade. Working in daily rehearsals, preparation at home, working effectively with other group members, and observing good rehearsal procedures are qualities that every member can achieve in order to insure a high grade. Students will be evaluated on their individual progress based on:

- the relationship of their ability to their performance,
- their ability to work effectively and cooperatively in group settings, and
- their observance of proper rehearsal procedures.

Students are not graded solely on how well they play or on how high they sit in their section. Periodic evaluation of individual performance and other written material may be required. Students are expected to be thoroughly prepared for and actively participate in class at all times, regularly reflected in their overall grade.

## Rolling Gradebook

At Cooper all classes will be using a rolling gradebook. Rolling Gradebooks are a cumulative document. **Final grades are determined by a combination of all assignments and assessments** and not an average of quarter marks. The grade posted at the end of each traditional quarter is a snapshot of a student's current progress in the course.

A rolling gradebook allows for progress towards a final mark that captures the total picture of student grades, regardless of length of quarter or number of assignments in each quarter. Parents and students should always view the grade in StudentVue and ParentVue as it will have the most accurate and up-to-date grade.

## Grade Categories

Each quarter grade will be determined from the following categories:

1. Assessments (i.e. Concert Performances, Individual and Ensemble Performance Assessments, Quarter Project) – 40%
2. Participation (i.e. Rehearsal Technique and etiquette, daily participation and preparation, 1 on 1's with Mr. Baker/Mrs. Singer) – 40%
3. Smart Music/ Sight Reading Factory– 20%

Any student who scores below an 80% (B-) on a test, quiz, or major assignment can complete a retake to reach up to an 80%. Students should advocate for themselves by submitting a re-assessment form, which has students set retest date and reflection for how they will improve. Retakes are to occur within 5 school days. (FCPS Policy)

## Quarter Project (Symphonic Band Only)

**PURPOSE:** This project is meant to serve as some form of longer-term, independent study to target your needs for improvement as an individual player. Large ensemble classes like we have in school are mostly focused on ensemble skills/music performance. It is nearly impossible to serve the needs for improvement as individuals in this setting because of the size of band ensembles. Therefore, this project is meant to help you set goals for how to improve as an individual musician throughout the year. Individual improvement also improves ensemble performance in school, so helping yourself helps all of us!

This project is selected by the student each quarter and agreed upon by the director. **ALL Quarterly Projects should be arranged and mutually confirmed by the end of second week of each quarter.**

## PROJECT POSSIBILITIES:

- Take private lessons from a professional musician (**must** provide documentation of satisfactory progress and attendance). This is the most popular and highest recommended.
- Participation in an outside ensemble on your band instrument (AYPO/SO/CO, NVYW, VYW) (**must** provide documentation of satisfactory progress and attendance)

*\*ABOVE ARE THE **ONLY** OPTIONS WHICH MAY BE USED IN MULTIPLE GRADING PERIODS FOR CREDIT*

- Solo preparation and performance for the entire class with accompaniment – can be SmartMusic, or recording.
- Scales: pass off a given number of major scales, minor scales, modes, scales in thirds, chromatic, etc. *from memory*

**GRADING:** This project will count as a Test/Concert grade for the quarter.

### **What is Evaluated Daily in the Participation Grade?**

#### **Quality of Work in Daily Rehearsals**

Individual/Ensemble performance and improvement including:

Tone Quality	Intonation	Technique	Rhythm	Balance	Musicianship
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#### **Quality of Home Practice Evident in Daily Rehearsals:**

It is recommended that students practice regularly at home, at least 5 days a week for the amount of time necessary to accomplish the performance requirements of their particular ensemble. This home practice must be evident in daily rehearsals, and help students achieve goals, develop personal endurance, facility, range, and characteristic tone. Practice should involve self-monitoring and reflection. Students are encouraged to study privately to maximize individual potential. Practice Journals may be required based on student progress.

#### **Relationship of Ability to Performance:**

Students are expected to work to the best of their ability in each daily rehearsal. Students are encouraged to ask for extra help from an instructor/teacher when needed. Help is always available and students should take advantage of this opportunity.

#### **Group Relationship**

Students are expected to work effectively with the director and with classmates. They must fulfill their individual responsibility to the ensemble and the total program. This includes punctuality and attendance to the following:

- Performances
- Class
- Extra Rehearsals

#### **Rehearsal Procedure**

Students are expected to be attentive and cooperative in daily rehearsals. Students should have the correct music and have equipment in proper playing condition at all times. Proper posture and playing position should be strictly observed. Concentration level should be extremely high while playing and talking should occur only at the appropriate times. Musical instructions should be clearly understood and implemented immediately. Students are expected to mark parts when necessary and treat all music and equipment with respect.

#### **Private Lessons**

To facilitate optimal student success, students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. Lessons allow students to work on instrument specific skills that cannot be covered in our band class alone. A list of private teachers is available on the Cooper band website ([www.cooperbands.com](http://www.cooperbands.com)). We will be hosting private teachers **at** Cooper. Please contact the teachers ASAP to secure a spot.

## **Equipment Rental Fees**

Instrument Rental Fees pertain to students who use Cooper MS instruments. Each student using a Cooper instrument will receive an FCPS contract for the year. (Reference Regulation 5922).

## **Uniform Purchase Fee**

All students will wear Concert Black. This includes long black dress pants, a black long-sleeve button up shirt (collared and black buttons) and closed-toe black dress shoes. More information will be given.

## **Course Materials Fee**

Course material fees cover consumable materials associated with a course and are a required element of that course. This fee is similar to required fees paid for certain, other FCPS classes. It covers consumable course materials related to the course. The fee this year for band is \$75.00. This will include things like SmartMusic; all sheet music/binders/books we use; daily materials for small repairs; supplemental personnel and equipment.

## **Required For all Students/Instruments:**

1. All students need an area they can safely perform and interact with the class. Students will need to use their camera to be properly evaluated.
2. A small metronome/tuner is an excellent practice tool to keep at home. (Not provided).
3. A wire music stand for home practice is an inexpensive purchase that can help students maintain proper posture during practice (Not provided).

## **Instrument Specific Recommendations**

When renting or purchasing an instrument, we recommend that you visit reputable music stores only and stick with well-known instrument brands such as Artley, Bach, Conn, Gemeinhardt, Jupiter, and Yamaha. Purchasing an instrument is an investment, and we want you to get the most for your money. If a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. Many on-line or non-music retail stores sell instruments at very inexpensive prices, but those instruments are generally of low quality. We caution you from purchasing these instruments as they are generally unable to be maintained and repaired, and end up needing to be replaced. Students are encouraged to seek out the advice of the band directors or private teachers before purchasing an instrument.

Middle School Band is a time when your child may start to outgrow their beginner model instrument. This is a good time to consider upgrading to an instrument of higher quality that will hold up better and help your child sound their best. Please let us know if we can help you determine if your child is ready for a new instrument and provide some brand and model recommendations.

## Specific Recommendations

**Flute:** Cleaning rod and silk cloth – please do not use a long fuzzy rod that stays in your instrument

**Clarinet:** Silk cleaning cloth. The yellow fuzzy thing they come with are terrible.

Vandoren Mouthpieces: BD5, with Rovner Versa X Ligature OR what your private teacher recommends

Vandoren reeds (2.5 or higher) and reed case to hold 4 reeds (Rico Reserve, Mitchell Lurie may work)

**Double Reeds:** Several reeds, Reed box to store reeds, Silk cleaning swab, and small cup for water.

**All Saxes:** Silk cleaning cloth. (The yellow fuzzy thing they come with are terrible)

Vandoren Strength 2.5 or higher reeds. Rico Reserve also OK.

Selmer C\* Mouthpiece with Rovner ligature

**Trumpet:** Valve oil and tuning slide grease

Bach 5c mouthpiece OR what your private teacher recommends (NOT 7c)

Denis Wick straight mute

**French Horn:** Rotor oil, Valve oil, and Tuning Slide Grease

Farkas Model MDC mouthpiece

**Trombone/Euphonium:** Valve oil and tuning slide grease

Schilke 51D (Large or Small bore depending on instrument)

**Tuba:** Conn Helleberg Mouthpiece, Valve oil and Tuning Slide Grease

**Percussion:** Xylophone kit and practice pad with stand for home (Washington Music Center/Music and Arts).

## Cooper Band Calendar 2023-2024

**September 22<sup>nd</sup>** – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Night at Langley HS (all 8<sup>th</sup> grade expected to attend)

**December 4<sup>th</sup>** - Winter Concert (all bands required @ Langley HS)

**December 19-22<sup>nd</sup>** - Midwest Conference in Chicago for Symphonic Band

**January 6<sup>th</sup>** - All District Band Auditions (Symphonic Band Students required, others encouraged @ McLean HS)

**February 1-3** – All District Band Event (only for selected students)

**February 29<sup>th</sup>** - Pre-Assessment Concert (all bands required) @ Langley HS

**March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>** - Assessment Performance for State Judges. This is our most important graded performance of the year. It is required by all bands and should be reserved. Please do not plan a trip/event over this weekend. EXACT times and details will be released in January. This event is at Madison HS.

- Concert Band (block 1, 2, 6)– March 8<sup>th</sup> (evening)
- Wind Ensemble (block 8) – March 8<sup>th</sup> (evening) OR March 9<sup>th</sup> (morning)
- Symphonic Band (block 7) – March 9<sup>th</sup> (evening)

**April 19-20<sup>th</sup>** – Solo and Ensemble Festival (optional for all students) @ Carson Middle

**April 21<sup>st</sup>** – Cooper/Langley Bands 5K race and walk event. Highly Encouraged for all. @ Langley HS

**April/May TBD** – Spring Trip for all band students (optional).

**May 30<sup>th</sup>** - Spring Concert (all bands required) @ Langley HS

## COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR CODE



Caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect form the basis for good moral character. At Cooper, we are committed to a school that promotes and embraces these qualities. We provide a school environment that enhances character-building experiences, so the students can gain a full understanding of the Honor Code. Students are encouraged to demonstrate the personal qualities associated with character building and good citizenship while doing their best and behaving in an honorable manner. We believe the effort each student makes in meeting academic challenges is more important than achieving high academic marks.

**The Honor Code at Cooper addresses cheating, plagiarizing, lying, and stealing.**

### **Cheating is...**

- copying someone else's work.
- allowing someone else to copy your work.
- using notes, aids, or written materials in any form during a test.
- talking, copying from someone else's paper, giving or receiving information by signs, gestures, or deception during a testing period.
- sharing information from a previously taken test.
- accessing unauthorized digital information for assessments and assignments.

### **Plagiarizing is...**

- presenting someone else's work as your own without proper citations or acknowledgement.
- copying word for word, without using quotation marks or giving credit to the source of the material.
- failing to use proper documentation and bibliography.
- having your parent or friend do an assignment which is then submitted as one's own work.

### **Lying is...**

- making an untrue statement with intent to deceive.
- creating false or misleading impressions.

### **Stealing is...**

- taking or appropriating without the right or permission to do so and with the intent to keep or make use of wrongfully.

**2023-24 Signature Page**

I have reviewed the contents of the contract with my student and we agree to its terms. We understand the commitment and are choosing to be an amazing member of this year's Cooper Band.

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

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_