

## **Hosford Bands Syllabus**

**2016-2017**

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I am very excited for a new year of band at Hosford Middle School. The following will serve as a guideline towards daily rehearsal procedures and expectations as a member of the band. Your success will depend on how well you know, understand, and fulfill the responsibilities each student must assume. My goal is to have fun and build a sense of musicianship, pride, and accomplishment while maintaining high educational standards in the music classroom. Students will gain valuable life skills through hard work, dedication, and teamwork while learning how to play their instrument and performing literature across all genres.

Band is not only about playing an instrument but also about learning music - how to play, sing, write, read, listen, analyze and describe what is being played.

The National Music Educator's Conference has adopted these standards that EVERY music student should have the opportunity to participate in. Listed below are these important standards...

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

***Band is an academic class. Musicians are expected to practice and study just as you would for any other class.***

I also want to take this time to say that I encourage all student musicians to take some private lessons on their instrument. I cannot stress enough the importance of one on one instruction combined with a consistent daily practice schedule. You will see major growth in a short period of time and strong musicianship skills that will last a lifetime. I have a list of private teachers for all instruments around the area at reasonable prices. Contact Mr. Johnston anytime if you are interested.

Sincerely,

Scott Johnston, Band Director

## **GENERAL MUSIC ROOM RULES AND PROCEDURES**

- Be on time and prepared and seated ready to begin 2 minutes after the bell rings
- Effective music rehearsals begin with silence
- Everyone must have a pencil
- Only band members are allowed in the auditorium
- Absolutely no gum, food, or drink allowed in the auditorium (water bottles okay)
- Instruments need to be stored in the proper place when not being used
- All students must have their name on their instrument case - many cases look alike
- All music must be kept in a music folder and stored in the appropriate area
- Hands on your instrument only
- If you are not a drummer you may not play any percussion instrument unless assigned
- Talking and playing out of turn is unacceptable. Show respect to your teacher and fellow classmates.

### **Discipline Policy**

- First Offense - Verbal warning
- Second Offense – Time out and Writing assignment(Time out/Think sheet)
- Third Offense – Referral, Instrument put away for day, call home
- Final Offense – Conference with Parent and Principal (if necessary)

Performing in the band is a privilege. Students should have a strong desire to excel in music and practice on a consistent basis.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Here is the breakdown of what you will be graded on:

### ***Participation/Classwork 25%***

Your effort in class is a large part of how successful you will be throughout the year. Tardiness, misbehavior, talking and playing out of turn will greatly affect your grade. I will come to class everyday ready to teach, so I expect every student to come to class ready to learn. Be prepared for each class daily by bringing your instrument with all proper supplies, music and method book kept neatly in a folder, and a pencil. Random supply checks will occur all year long and is part of your grade.

### ***Performances 30%***

Music performances are scheduled as far in advance as possible. Occasionally a performance may come up with short notice. Performances are mandatory unless there are extenuating circumstances for your absence. Students that have conflicts must bring a written excuse, signed by their parents, no less than 2 weeks before a performance. Excused absences will need to be made up by doing an assignment approved by Mr. Johnston – as discussed with the student and myself. Failure to participate in a scheduled performance without a written excuse or a valid reason, such as a sudden illness, will greatly affect a student's overall grade. Students are also expected to help set up, tear down, and STAY for the entire concert. Everyone deserves an audience.

### ***Tests & Quizzes 25%***

There will be 2 playing pop quizzes at random as well as a playing test at the end of each quarter. Pop quizzes will always center around one of the practice journal goals from the previous week. Playing tests are performed individually in front of the entire class. You will be graded on knowledge of concepts and literature covered in class as well as how you respect the performers as a listener and audience member while students are testing. These are important for me to check in on musicians from time to time and make sure goals are being met. Regular home practice will have students plenty prepared.

### ***Homework/Practice 20%***

#### **PRACTICE = MUSICAL GROWTH**

Practice is crucial to your success as a musician and is also vital in building a strong performing ensemble. Students should practice at home 4 to 5 times a week, 30 minutes each session (20 minutes for beginners), in a quiet room at the same time of day. Spread practice throughout the week – one single two hour session is not an effective way to practice. Only then will you witness the beauty of musical growth.

Practice journals are due every Monday and will be an important part of a student's grade. At the end of each class students will write in home practice goals so they are able to focus on what is important at home. Journals require a parent signature for a student to receive credit.

Keep in mind, two hours a week is the minimum you should be practicing. If you can't play your part, you should be practicing more. I expect musicians to come to class prepared!

**Musicians need to bring their instrument home daily.**

#### ***How to Practice***

We discuss practice quite a bit during class because it's such an important part of learning an instrument. There is so much information given to the students in the early stages that sometimes they can get overwhelmed and lose track of how to approach practice and what it is they are supposed to focus on. ***I make it easy because I tailor my class the same way they should approach practice at home which covers all aspects of each instrument.*** The most important thing I tell my students is that if you set a schedule you will more likely practice. For example, when I was first learning, my time to practice was right after dinner every night for 30min - It was just routine. I don't expect students to do that, but setting a schedule of 20 minutes, 3 to 4 days a week for beginners and 30 minutes, 4 to 5 days a week for int/adv will ensure musical growth and an enjoyment of playing their instrument. Here is an example of what home practice should look like:

BEGINNERS:

A. Warm Up (5 to 10 min)

1. Embouchure - Long Tones (Holding Notes for the length of an entire breath)
2. Scale Exercises

B. Rhythm and Melodic Exercises (5 to 10min)

1. Lessons from Standard of Excellence Book 1

- C. Songs and Exploring (10 min or more)
1. Using the skills you have learned to work on classroom literature
  2. Explore/Experiment on your instrument.

#### INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED

- A. Warm Up (15 min)
1. Embouchure – Long Tones / Lip Slurs (Brass)
  2. Scales
    - a. Chromatic
    - b. Major/Minor Scales
  3. Technique
    - a. Speed Drills
    - b. Lessons from Standards of Excellence Book 2 (Int) Foundations (Adv)
  4. Percussion (rudiment exercises)
- B. Concert Music (10 to 20 min)
- C. Extras and Exploring (10 min or more)
1. The students may extra pieces of music that they can work on. Maybe start working on a Solo/Ensemble festival piece
  2. It's amazing what students come up with after playing for only a few years. Try and write your own song. Be creative! Have fun!

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR BAND**

**Daily Materials:** Instrument with proper supplies, music, pencil, music folder with method book and concert literature

**Home Materials:** Chair with no arms, music stand, metronome, tuner, and a quiet space

**Method Books:** *Students are expected to purchase their own Standards of Excellence method book from a local music store or online (\$6.95)*

**Beginners** will use Standard of Excellence Book 1.

**Intermediates** will use Standard of Excellence book 2 **after a solid review of book 1.**

**Advanced** will use Foundations for Superior Performance

#### **Instrument Supplies:**

**Flute:** cleaning rod small handkerchief. A cleaning snake is best.

**Clarinet/Saxophone:** cork grease, cleaning kit, at least 3 working reeds at all times.

**Bassoon/Oboe:** cork grease, cleaning kit, and at least 3 reeds at all times.

**Brass:** *Valved instruments:* Valve oil, cork grease, small rag. *Trombone:* Slide oil, small water bottle, small rag.

**Percussion:** Practice pad/snare drum, Vic Firth SD-1 or comparable sticks.

**Tuners and metronomes** are strongly suggested materials for band. Both of these items are very important and are for home use only. I will be using these tools on a regular basis in the classroom:

*Metronomes* keep steady time (tempo). A young player will often play inconsistently, and will not develop the internal clock they need to play consistently without it.

*Tuners* check to see if the student is sharp (high) or flat (low) of the correct pitch (note). As young players develop their embouchure (mouth muscles), it is very important for them to be able to check themselves to ensure they are playing properly. For instance, a clarinet may play flat, not knowing that his/her embouchure is not firm enough. A tuner would let them know that they need to firm up their embouchure, thus correcting themselves.

**Sheet music** is VERY expensive. You are required to keep your sheet music clean and free of folds, crumples, or paper airplanes! Music must be kept neatly in a folder at all times.

### **CONCERT DRESS**

All students are required to dress appropriately for concerts. Concerts are a formal event. Much time and effort have been put forth to ensure the students sound great. The band should both look and sound great. Here is the required dress code:

**Boys:** White dress shirt, black dress pants, black socks, and black dress shoe

**Girls:** White dress shirt or blouse, black dress pants or skirt, black socks, and black dress shoes.

\*No exceptions unless discussed with Mr. Johnston.

I understand the financial constraint some may have in obtaining the appropriate clothing. Please let me know in advance so that your child does not get graded down for being dressed inappropriately.

### **CHAIR SEATING AND CHALLENGING**

This will occur for the advanced bands at the end of September – chairs will be determined by a student's proficiency on their instrument and can change throughout the year. If a student wishes to move up higher in chair order, they must set up a meeting with Mr. Johnston. Intermediates will test for chair position when I feel the time is right.

### **INSTRUMENTS/RENTALS**

All students must have an instrument in good working order. There are several options for students.

- The first is to rent through the Portland School District. Instruments are rented for \$75 for the school year. I do not recommend renting directly from the school. These instruments are generally in poor shape. Repairs also take a considerable amount of time. The student IS required to make up practice time lost while waiting for repairs. The plus side to this rental plan is that students who qualify for free or reduced lunch will get the instrument free for the year.
- The second option is to rent from a local music store. **This is the best option.** There are music stores all over the area that range in cost from \$25 a month to \$119 for the entire school year. These instruments are in good working order, are clean, and have been well maintained. In the event that the instrument needs repair, local stores are the quickest route for getting the instrument back in a timely manner.

- The third option is Internet rental. These instruments will also be in good shape. The problem with going this route is that there is not local repair. Repair shops that rent instruments are more inclined to hurry a repair through, as opposed to fixing someone else's rental instrument.
- Please hold off on the purchase of an instrument until having a discussion with Mr. Johnston first. You might find a bargain on craigslist or ebay only to find out it needs \$400 in repairs. Let me help you find a quality instrument for your young musician.

*In order to rent from the district, you must meet one of these criteria:*

- Be on free/reduced lunch
- Asked by Mr. Johnston to change instruments
- Have a financial need

### **Instrument Rental**

- Tigard Music: (highly recommended), <http://tigardmusic.com/>
- Beacock Music: (highly recommended), <http://www.beacockmusic.com/>
- Portland Music Company: <http://www.portlandmusiccompany.com/>
- Wally's Music: <http://wallysmusic.com/>
- Lake Music: 503-636-3666
- Musicians Friend: <http://www.musiciansfriend.com/>

## **TAG MODIFICATION**

Band is an ability based class. All instrument sections will organized according to ability as the year progresses. Higher performing students are put on advanced parts in Hosford's elite group, the Symphonic Band

## **FUNDRAISING AND PARENT MEETINGS**

Parent involvement and fundraising is an important aspect of running a band program and will be done on an as needed basis. I will be sending information to parents early in the school year to set up a time to meet and discuss fundraising and how it will be applied to the school year.