

# **LaGrange Middle School**

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

**2009-2010**



# Welcome to the LaGrange Middle School 8th Grade Band!

September 2009

Dear Students and Parents,

On behalf of the LaGrange Middle School Band Department, we want to welcome you to the 2009-2010 school year. We are looking forward to another great year of making music here at LMS & Arlington! The Arlington bands have long been recognized for a tradition of excellence. You are a part of that continuing tradition. This tradition of excellence has been the result of hard work by teachers, administrators, parents, and mostly the students. We hope this year will be the LaGrange Middle School's best Eighth Grade Band ever.

One of the key elements of success in any music program is communication between the directors and parents. We will do our best to keep you informed of all of the band's performances and events, as well as your child's individual progress. The purpose of this handbook is to provide each parent and band student an understanding of the policies, procedures and expectations of the LMS 8th Grade Band. Parental support is the most important factor in the success of any band student. If you ever have any questions, you may either email me at [mtiskowitz@acsdny.org](mailto:mtiskowitz@acsdny.org) or call me at 486-4880 ext. 113. Most importantly, we hope we will see you at your child's performances!

I look forward to an exciting and successful year!

Michael Tiskowitz  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Director

## 2009 – 2010 Music Department Schedule

### October 2009

11	Sunday	Arlington HS Marching Band Invitational
24	Saturday	DCMEA Saxophone Day @ Dover HS
30	Friday	Arlington HS BONE-ANZA Family Concert

### December 2009

1	Tuesday	<u>8<sup>th</sup> GRADE BAND CONCERT</u> (7 p.m.)
3	Thursday	LMS CONCERT (7 p.m.)
9	Wednesday	LMS CONCERT (7 p.m.)
10	Thursday	Winter Concert Snow Date

### January 2010

29	Friday	DCMEA J.H. All-County Festival @ Dover HS
30	Saturday	DCMEA J.H. All-County Festival @ Dover HS

### February 2010

5	Friday	JH All-County Snow Date
6	Saturday	JH All-County Snow Date
7	Sunday	Arlington HS "PRISMS" Concert (3 p.m.)

### March 2010

11	Thursday	LMS CONCERT (7 p.m.)
16	Tuesday	<u>8<sup>th</sup> GRADE BAND CONCERT</u> (7 p.m.)
18	Thursday	LMS CONCERT (7 p.m.)
22	Monday	March Concert Snow Date

### April 2010

16	Friday	NYSSMA Solo Festival @ AMS (6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Graders)
17	Saturday	NYSSMA Solo Festival @ AMS (6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Graders)
23	Friday	NYSSMA SOLO FESTIVAL @ RED HOOK HS (8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE ONLY)
24	Saturday	NYSSMA SOLO FESTIVAL @ RED HOOK HS (8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE ONLY)

### May 2010

21	Friday	MUSIC IN THE PARKS FESTIVAL @ Dorney Park
24	Monday	Arlington All-District "Evening of Jazz" (7 p.m.)
25	Tuesday	LMS CONCERT (7:30 p.m.)
26	Wednesday	<u>8<sup>th</sup> GRADE BAND CONCERT</u> (7:30 p.m.)

### June 2010

2	Wednesday	LMS CONCERT (7:30 p.m.)
6	Sunday	Arlington HS "Concert on the Lawn"
13	Saturday	LaGrange Community Day @ Freedom Park

## **CLASSROOM MATERIALS**

All students are required to have their Music Folder, Instrument, & Pencil everyday! Band supplies such as reeds, cork grease, and valve oil are available in limited quantities from the LMS music dept. Students should purchase these items on their own at a local music store or online. Deifus & Mikolajewski in Pleasant Valley and Paul Effman Music in LaGrangeville sell these items. *D&M makes deliveries to LMS every Friday.*

Specific materials are listed below:

**Flute:** Tuning rod and cleaning cloth.

**Oboe/Bassoon:** Two reeds and cases, case for water (35 mm film canister works well), cork grease and cleaning swab.

**Clarinet:** Three (3) Vandoren 2 ½ reeds in your case, mouthpiece and ligature, reed case, cork grease and cleaning swab. Students should also have a full box of reeds at home.

**Saxophones:** Three (3) Vandoren 2 ½ reeds in your case, mouthpiece and ligature, reed case, cork grease, cleaning swab and a Neotech neck strap. Students should also have a full box of reeds at home.

**Trumpet:** 3C or 5C mouthpiece, valve oil, mouthpiece brush and snake. Instrument should be in good working order. All valves and slides should be clean and free moving.

**French Horn:** Holton Farkas MC mouthpiece, rotary oil and mouthpiece brush.

**Trombone:** Bach 6½ AL mouthpiece. Slides should be clean and free moving. Trombone players should use the Slide-o-mix Rapid Comfort brand of slide lubricant.

**Baritone/Tuba:** Baritones: Bach 6½ AL mouthpiece and Tubas: Conn Helleberg 120 Mouthpiece, & Mouthpiece pouch. All Low Brass students should also have their own bottle of valve oil for use in school.

**Percussion:** Stick bag containing snare sticks, xylophone mallets, suspended cymbal mallets and timpani mallets. **ALL PERCUSSIONISTS** are responsible for keeping school owned percussion clean and in good working order.

## **LESSON BOOKS**

All students are required to have their own lesson book. Most wind players should be using either Breeze Easy Method – Book 2 or Belwin Student – Intermediate. Please make sure that you have the correct book for your instrument and lesson group. Most percussion groups will be using Belwin Student – Beginner for Mallets and Alfred Drum Method.

## **SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS**

The Arlington CSD will provide a limited number of instruments for student use. These instruments include such highly expensive instruments as the Bassoon, Oboe, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba, and general Percussion equipment. This equipment is generally purchased by the school district for student use because of its extremely high value. ***Thus, all school owned equipment must be handled with optimum care.*** Students failing to care for their school issued instrument will lose the privilege to use such instruments.

1. When possible, low brass students will be issued an instrument for home use and one for school use.

2. The Arlington CSD does not provide insurance for individually or school owned equipment. ***Students will be held responsible for school owned instruments issued to them. This responsibility will include fire, theft, accidental damage, abuse, and general maintenance not incurred through normal use.***
3. Students and parents must sign an instrument check-out form before the instrument can be used by the student.
4. Each instrument will be issued in good playing condition. Each issued instrument will be checked and cleaned prior to issue. Students are expected to maintain their issued instruments accordingly.
5. The band member is financially responsible for all equipment and/or materials checked out to him or her.
6. All equipment and materials must be kept in their proper storage location when not in use.

***Special Note***

School owned instruments are not to be treated as “free” instruments. Basic supplies must still be purchased and repairs must still be made just like personally owned instruments. Please strive to treat these instruments as if they were your own. Most school owned instruments exceed \$2,000-5,000 in value.

**INSTRUMENT STORAGE**

LaGrange Middle School provides specific storage space for each type of instrument. Students must put away instruments properly. We cannot be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen instruments.

**INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE**

Musical instruments are intricate machines, which require maintenance from time to time. Woodwind instruments, with their complex mechanisms and pads require more maintenance and adjustments than brass instruments.

Students renting instruments from area music stores should be sent to that same store for maintenance. For students renting from Deifus & Mikolajewski, the band director will typically arrange for maintenance pick-up. However, there may be instances where the parent will be responsible to drop off and pick up the instrument from the supplier.

The band directors here at LMS maintain many school-owned instruments. Excessive wear or damage to any school instrument caused either by neglect or accident is the responsibility of the parent, at the price determined by the company repairing or replacing the instrument.



**RESPONSIBILITY – COMMUNICATION!**

## **GRADING**

Band is a primarily performance-based class. Therefore, grades are primarily based on performance. Several playing tests will be administered throughout the year. Practice charts will determine how much home practice happens each week. **Improvement in playing skills can only happen when skills learned in class are reinforced at home.** Written tests/quizzes may occasionally be given. Attendance at all concerts is mandatory, and totaled into the grade average.

### **LESSONS – 50%**

All band members will be scheduled for required group or individual lessons during school hours. Lessons help to improve technical skills, monitor individual progress, extend motivational challenges, and examine instrument mechanical problems. Students will be grouped as the schedule allows by instrument, class schedule, and ability. We recommend that students mark their lesson times in their student planners so that they do not forget them, as it will be their responsibility to make it to their lesson. Lessons take place on a ROTATIONAL basis and rotate over 5-6 periods. Students should only miss the same class less than once per month. If a student misses a lesson, they must talk to Mr. Tiskowitz within a week of that missed lesson to schedule a make-up lesson, in which they have the opportunity to receive full credit. If the student does not speak with a director within a week of the missed lesson, the student will no longer have the opportunity to make up the lesson and they will receive no credit. Make-up lessons take place during lunch or a study hall and last approximately 15 minutes.

Permissible reasons for missing a lesson are:

- If you are Failing the class
- Test or quiz in class (students should come to their lesson when they complete their quiz)
- Regents Earth Science Lab
- Guest Speaker in class

New units in class, group projects, or not having enough time for Tech projects are NOT acceptable reasons for missing a scheduled music lesson. Please make sure that you make arrangements to get and complete your homework before the next day's class. Lessons missed due to grade level class trips or Mr. Tiskowitz's absence, do not need to be made up.

### **Practicing – 30%**

The practice requirement is intended to encourage students to improve at their instrument. Just as students must do homework to be successful in their other academic classes, students must practice at home to be successful in band. Practicing is the majority of the "homework" in band class. Write the minutes that you've practiced on your practice card each time you practice. At the end of each week, total your minutes and have your parent or guardian sign your chart. Practice Charts will be checked EVERY WEEK in lessons. If practice charts are handed in late, partial credit will be given.

The band is constantly preparing a wide variety of music for concert and contest preparation. Students will also have assignments for playing tests, lesson books, as well as solos to work on. We encourage students to find a time and place where they can practice every day and develop a workable routine. Students who say that they have nothing to practice or have learned all of the material being taught in band should look into studying with a private teacher who can challenge them even more.

All students should try and practice at least 2 hours/week. Usually in 20-30 minute sessions 4-5 times a week. Parents, please encourage your son/daughter to practice at home, as their success in band depends on developing a regular routine each week for practice. Don't just find the time to practice...make the time!

### **Classroom Participation – 20%**

Grades based on classroom participation reflect a student's contribution to the class and his/her ability to listen and follow instructions. A good band is like a good team. Each individual's efforts must be constructive. Disruptive behavior by one individual weakens the band.

Is the student paying attention?

Is the student playing at appropriate times?

Is the student able to be polite while waiting for another section to rehearse?

Is the student able to participate without disrupting the classroom?

Every student is expected to come to class prepared each day. The student must bring all necessary materials (i.e. instrument, pencil and music). Failure to bring these things will result in a student who is unprepared and cannot properly participate in class activities.

### **Concert attendance**

Attendance at concerts is mandatory except for extreme illness, death in the family, or engagements of long standing where the band director has been given advance notice in writing. Arrangements can always be made to find students a ride to school. Please do not miss a concert because you "couldn't find a ride." Unexcused absence from a concert will constitute a failing grade for that quarter's grade.



## **RESPONSIBILITY – COMMUNICATION!**

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

Private lessons are the best way for students to get help with their individual playing habits. Private lessons are a wonderful way to help an individual in the band program develop their skills faster in a one-on-one setting with a teacher who plays his/her instrument professionally. Students that would like to participate in the NYSSMA Solo Festival are encouraged (but certainly not required) to take private lessons outside of school. If you are interested, a list of private-instructors can be obtained by contacting Mr. Tiskowitz.

## **PURCHASING NEW INSTRUMENTS**

Please speak to Mr. Tiskowitz or your private teacher BEFORE purchasing a new instrument. We have numerous resources for you to find the best instrument for you at the best price.

## **8th GRADE BAND TRIP**

This year the 8th Grade Band will be taking a trip to the Music in the Parks Festival in Allentown, Pennsylvania. The band will play an adjudicated performance in front of two nationally recognized musicians. After our performance students will have the opportunity to spend the day and enjoy Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom. An awards ceremony to celebrate the students' achievements will take place in the evening. This year our MITP trip will take place on Friday, May 21, 2010. Most years the cost of the trip runs around \$100. Fundraising opportunities will be available.

## **FUNDRAISING**

This year the LMS Music Department will be running two fundraisers. At the end of September we will begin our annual Yankee Candle fundraiser. Deliveries usually take place in late November or early December. We will also be selling Adams' Poinsettias for our Winter concerts.

## **BAND WEBSITE**

The LMS Music Department Website can be found at:

<http://teacherweb.com/NY/Arlington/LMSMusicDepartment>

## **OTHER PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES**

FLUTE ENSEMBLE    CLARINET ENSEMBLE    BRASS ENSEMBLE    JAZZ BAND

These ensembles typically meet after-school and consist of music students who have advanced enough on their instruments to perform the music and who enjoy playing and learning about small ensembles or jazz. Membership is determined by the recommendation of the band directors.

## **PERFORMANCE DRESS & ETIQUETTE**

### **Concert Attire**

Performers should be dressed appropriately any time the LaGrange Middle School bands appear in performance. Being part of a band performance is much like being a performer in a drama production; people are coming to see and hear you perform. Guidelines for concert appearance are as follows:

- **Gentlemen** should wear BLACK dress slacks, a WHITE button-down shirt, that is tucked in, a tie, black socks and dress shoes.
- **Ladies** should wear a long BLACK skirt (that goes below knee length when seated,) or dress slacks, and a WHITE dress top.
- *Jeans, shorts, capris, sneakers and flip-flops are not considered appropriate concert apparel.*

### **Concert Behavior and Expectations**

We consider that all of our performances begin the moment that you arrive at the site of the performance, whether at LaGrange Middle School or in another facility. Good performances begin with concentrated preparation prior to the event and particularly the day of the event. Students will be expected to be on their best behavior at any performance activity.

### **Audience Etiquette**

Students will frequently be members of an audience as part of our performances, or at other events throughout the year. It is very important that respect is shown to performing students or visiting performers. Talking during a performance is not appropriate. Applause for conductors as they walk on stage is appropriate, as well as during jazz performances after solos. The key to proper etiquette is to treat all performers with respect, much as you wish to have others treat your performance.



**RESPONSIBILITY – COMMUNICATION!**

## **BAND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Arlington School District has a strong tradition of excellent instrumental music. LaGrange Middle School has continued to play an important role in that tradition with fine concert, small ensemble and jazz bands. With this success comes increased student interest and larger class sizes. Large group classes are an essential part of a successful band program and require students to use good citizenship and self discipline skills at all times. It is important to remember that whenever a teacher finds it necessary to spend time disciplining a student for misbehavior, other students are robbed of that educational time!

Most students elect to enroll in band because they enjoy music, they want to learn and enjoy being part of a large ensemble. Our goal is to assure that the education of these students is not jeopardized by the behavior of a student who does not share these desires. Parents are asked to support this discipline policy with their own consequences at home.

In order to provide an effective learning climate for all students in the band program, the following discipline plan will be followed:

### **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:**

1. Bring a cooperative and positive attitude to each rehearsal.
2. Do not talk when the director is speaking.
3. Follow directions the first time given.
4. Practice appropriate posture when playing your instrument.
5. Stay focused and attentive at all times.
6. No gum or candy at any time.
7. Be respectful of other student's equipment and music.

### **IF A STUDENT CHOOSES TO USE APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR:**

1. Verbal praise.
2. Recognition for outstanding achievement and improvement.

### **IF A STUDENT CHOOSES TO USE INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR:**

- Warning - A director speaks to a student during rehearsal concerning their lack of attention or inappropriate behavior.
- 1st Violation - Director speaks to student for a second time and all participation points are lost.
- 2nd Violation - Removal of student from the band setting to another location.
- Repeated Disruptive Situations - A call to the parents will be made with the possibility of a conference with the director and/or an administrator to discuss the future of the student in the band program.

Any student who severely disrupts the band classroom, prohibits the directors from teaching, or slows the other students' learning process, will immediately be sent to the office.

# Student / Parent Contract for the LaGrange MS 8th Grade Band

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the LMS Band and  
I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent / guardian of the above band  
member received a band handbook and **HAVE READ** and understands the  
following criteria for members of this band:

1. I will follow school rules and regulations as stated in the school and band handbooks at all times.
2. Band should be a year long commitment. I will be committed to being the best I can be during this commitment.
3. I will practice my assigned parts thoroughly and work hard to make my playing be a positive contribution to the group.
4. Understanding that my inclusion in class rehearsals makes my part integral to the group and depended on by others, I accept the obligation to attend all rehearsals, lessons and concerts. In cases where conflict is unavoidable, I will notify Mr. Tiskowitz in writing at least 2 days before a rehearsal or lesson and 3 weeks before a performance.
5. I agree to post the performance and rehearsal dates given to me at the beginning of the year on my home calendar and work to avoid conflicts.
6. A punishment of suspension from school for any reason will result in me **NOT** being able to attend any band functions away from school.
7. I will respect all of the equipment in the band room. I understand that if I cause damage to any instrument or equipment, I will be held liable for the charges for repair or replacement.

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

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_