



## **Student and Parent Handbook**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Midlands Home School Band is to assist home school families by providing excellent group band instruction in a nurturing environment and by developing students' skills and appreciation of music as a means to glorify God.

## **PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

### ***Assist home school families –***

- Our primary purpose is to serve home school families but we will not exclude students from other private institutions who desire to participate in the program.

### ***Providing excellent group band instruction –***

- Group instruction is primarily through the Beginner, Clinic and Concert bands, but may also include various instrumental ensembles.
- Private instruction on individual instruments is offered depending on instructor availability.
- The band is an educational organization, which should allow for variety in music and in types of groups. An underlying goal is to develop student musicians who are prepared to study music at the collegiate level if they so desire, which requires breadth in exposure, experience and instruction.
- The responsibility for fulfilling this instruction mandate lies with the Director of Bands and the Music Faculty.

### ***Nurturing Environment –***

- This refers to the character of the instructors and our expectation that they will serve as role models and mentors for the students.
- It also applies to our standards in student and parent conduct, speech, dress, etc. while they are involved in MHSB programs or events.
- And addresses our location, how we maintain our rehearsal environment and our consideration for our host church.

### ***Developing students' skills –***

- Students and parents share responsibility for the musical progress of the student. This would include meeting the academic requirements of the program, practice, rehearsal and performance attendance, preparation for auditions, care and maintenance of instruments and accessories.
- Instructors are expected to challenge students and provide them with opportunities to develop their skills through instruction, performance opportunities and appropriate academic requirements. This would include the study of various musical genres (classical, sacred, Christian contemporary, and other standard band literature) and of different musical elements (such as theory, listening skills, performance techniques, music appreciation etc.)

### ***Appreciation of Music as a Means to Glorify God***

- This includes keeping before students I Corinthians 10:31 *"whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."* The giving of glory to God is in the heart of the worshipper, for *"he has shown you, O man what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."* Micah 6:8
- Provide performance opportunities which minister to believers and opportunities that promote the cause of Christ.

## STAFF

### **Director of Bands - James C. Gill, Jr.**

Mr. Gill, the retired Director of Worship & Music of the SC Baptist Convention, holds a Bachelor of Music in Sacred Music from Louisiana Tech University and a Master of Church Music from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served as student conductor of his high school and college bands and was a Band Scholarship recipient all four years at Louisiana Tech. A low brass specialist, his major instrument is Tuba. He has served as the Director of the Instrumental Ensemble of the SC Singing Churchmen, Baptist All-State Band and Celebration Orchestra and at Several Baptist Associations. In addition to directing the MHS Band he also serves as the Orchestra Director and Music Associate at Lexington Baptist Church. He is a member of the Columbia Community Concert Band, the Lexington Brass Quintet and is principal Tubist for the Lake Murray Symphony Orchestra.

### **Assistant Band Director - Mrs. Betty Myers**

Mrs. Myers is a graduate of USC where she was in the USC Symphony and was the drum major of the Carolina Band. She has been teaching music for over 25 years. She plays flute in the Palmetto Concert Band, Lake Murray Symphony, Columbia Community Orchestra and Columbia Community Band. She founded and directs Southern Bronze, a community auditioned hand bell choir. She plays in churches all over the area and is a member of the Shandon Baptist orchestra. She directs all the hand bell choirs at Shandon Baptist and is the state hand bell consultant for the SC Baptist Convention. She also teaches at numerous music camps throughout the summer.

### **Administrative Director**

The Administrative Director along with the Director of Bands is responsible for the day to day operation of the Band. All non-music questions should be directed to the Administrative Director.

## PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

In keeping with the mission statement of the Band, the curriculum is designed to enable students to better glorify God through the gift of music. Students will have the opportunity to grow through technical skills and appreciation for the aesthetic, cultural and historical aspects of music.

The students will be grouped by ability into three groups: Beginning Band, Clinic Band and Concert Band. Student should be at least 10 years of age to begin band. Students under age 10 must meet with the Director of Bands for an interview before any exceptions are made. Efforts will be made to make Band a successful experience for each player. The Concert Band performs at all concerts, while the Beginning and Clinic Bands typically performs at MHSB's Christmas and spring concerts.

### Beginning Band

Beginning Band is for those students with little or no music or group instrumental experience. It covers the basics of music theory, introduction to their instrument and playing in a group. Progress will be greatly enhanced by private lessons on their chosen instrument. The SmartMusic computer program will be required to assist in training.

### Clinic Band

Clinic Band is made up of experienced musicians who have some ensemble experience. Progress and musical skill will be greatly enhanced by private lessons on their chosen instrument. The SmartMusic computer program will be required to assist in training.

### Concert Band

Concert Band students are experienced musicians with ensemble experience. Concert Band typically plays grade 2-3 music. Concert Band musicians will need a black 1 inch, 3 ring binder and the Smart Music Software.

### Chamber Ensembles

The chamber ensembles are an optional musical offering available to MHS Band members. Chamber ensembles are small groups organized by instrument and skill. Ensemble types vary according to participants but at any time can include intermediate and advanced brass, flute, saxophone, percussion, woodwind, Mixed Chamber Ensemble and Praise Band. Students must participate in MHS Band in order to play in a Chamber Ensemble. It is hoped that these ensembles will be more flexible and can function like ministry teams in the community.

### Private Lessons

Private lessons will be available through the Music Faculty and through advanced students under the supervision of the Music Faculty.

### Schedule of Classes

#### TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS

Beginner Band ..... 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Ensembles & Private Lessons..... 3:00pm - 3:45pm

Clinic/Concert Band ..... 3:45pm - 5:00pm

For all students Band Tuition includes two days of Band class. Students must commit to both days of band class in order to participate in the program; any exceptions must be approved by the Band Director.

All bands and ensembles meet at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 6952 Saint Andrews Rd, Columbia, SC 29212

## **CONCERT DRESS**

### **Formal**

#### Beginner Band

Young Ladies: white long sleeved blouse, black skirt (at least mid-calf including any side slits, no front slits) or long black pants, black shoes (no flip flops)

Young Men: white long sleeved dress shirt, black slacks, socks and dress shoes

#### Clinic Band, Concert Band and Chamber Ensembles

Young Ladies: black performance dress ordered through the band to be uniform, black shoes (no flip flops)

Young Men: white wing-tipped tuxedo shirt black dress pants, shoes and socks. Black bow-tie and cummerbund, black dress shoes and sox. Alternatively, Maroon bow tie and cummerbund supplied by the Band

## **Casual**

### All Bands and Ensembles

Young Ladies and Young Men: Khaki slacks or skirts and an MHSB Polo Shirt, ordered through the Band. For some performances long khaki shorts or capris will be allowed.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

### **Daily Class Work**

The development of good musical skills is dependent on each student having his instrument and all necessary materials in class every day. In addition, students are not only learning individual skills, but also cooperative learning skills that are necessary to be a part of a musical ensemble. Included in this daily class work is the demonstration of good warm-up and rehearsal techniques. The ability to listen attentively and to follow instructions is crucial for quality performance. Lack of an instrument in class due to its being repaired or a failure to play because of discomfort due to dental work will be excused if the Director is informed by a phone call (920-2520) prior to band.

### **Practice Record**

Practicing is the student's homework in band and is necessary for skills to be mastered. Every student is expected to practice regularly - 5 days during the week for an average of 20 minutes for beginners, 30 minutes for Clinic, and 45 minutes for Concert Band.

The Practice Record Form must be signed by a parent and turned in at band on the Tuesday following a week of practice. Parents should check that the students practice the correct assignment and make sure that they are practicing, and not just "playing around". It's not the amount of time that is practiced that makes the greatest difference; it's the quality of the practice session.

### **Regular Attendance**

It is expected that students will attend and be on time for all rehearsals. To be prepared to begin rehearsal on time, students should be in their chairs with instruments and warming up by 10 minutes prior to rehearsal. If a student has to miss a rehearsal due to family trips, doctor's appointments, etc, please let Mr. Gill know at least one week in advance by email ([jimgill@bellsouth.net](mailto:jimgill@bellsouth.net)).

If an emergency arises and a student has to miss, please contact Mr. Gill by phone (920-2520) prior to 1:00 PM the day of the emergency.

### **Performance Attendance**

Band is a group project and every member is crucial for the success of any performance. Concert attendance is mandatory. If an EMERGENCY situation requires a student to miss a concert, the Parent MUST contact the Mr. Gill in person by phone (920-2520) to discuss the situation. Band is a commitment, so please do not ask to miss for personal fun trips, etc.

Unless otherwise noted performance dates are for Concert Band, only. Beginning and Clinic Bands are typically part of the Christmas Concert, the Spring Concert and the Music Faire. MHSB will do its best to provide families with the performance dates as early as possible.

### **Region and State Events**

It is expected that all Concert Band students audition for Region and All State Band, and participate in the Concert Band Festival and Solo & Ensemble Festival. All of these events take place in the spring semester. You can keep up to date on event requirements, registration deadlines and event dates via the South Carolina Band Directors website [www.bandlink.org](http://www.bandlink.org). Students must register through the

MHSB Band Director to participate. Registration information and deadlines is communicated to students well in advance of the deadline. MHSB is located in Region II.

## **EXPECTATION OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

The Band is a team effort and all must do their best, or it affects everyone. Self and group discipline is a crucial part of the band program. A general rule might be, "If you don't think the director will like it, please don't do it!"

A. The student is expected to be on time, remain through the end of rehearsal, to have all of his/her materials and to participate in a positive manner.

This means the student:

1. must follow the director's instructions.
2. must be in the rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time.
3. needs to ask permission to speak by raising his/her hand and waiting to be acknowledged.
4. must have his/her instrument at all rehearsals.
5. must have accessories at all times—pencils, extra reeds, neck straps, valve oil, cork grease, drum sticks, etc. The student is responsible for the care and maintenance of his/her instrument.
6. must take care of any repair problem in a prompt manner.

B. The student is expected to demonstrate good citizenship, be courteous, and to respect instructors, guests and other students and their property.

C. The student is expected to keep his/her hands to himself/herself and will only touch/play an instrument belonging to or rented by the student.

D. The student is expected to practice at home daily.

E. The student is expected to be prepared on assigned music.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENT PARTICIPATION**

MHSB is a volunteer organization with only the Music Faculty receiving any compensation. Because of this it takes all of our families to make the Band a success. Parents are expected to support the Band in the following ways:

- support your child in a commitment to participate in performances
- select your volunteer position and follow through with your commitment
- commit to being an informed parent by reading the Handbook, newsletters and Band e-mails
- review the MHSB calendar, note any conflicts early and communicate with the band director
- support the fundraising efforts of the Band
- attend the required Booster Club meetings
- be on time for band rehearsals and for pick up after band
- Inform Mr. Gill of any absences by phone (920-2520) prior to band.

## **MHSB POLICIES**

### **Registration**

A non-refundable registration fee of \$30 per student is required at registration.

### **Tuition**

\$200 per semester per student for the first two students, and \$100 per semester per student for the third and fourth students.

The optional Chamber Ensemble tuition is an additional \$65 per student for the year. Students must participate in band in order to be eligible for Chamber Ensemble and there are no multiple student discounts for Chamber Ensembles.

Tuition is due each semester on the first day of class. Alternatively, tuition may be paid in eight monthly payments (\$55/month per student September – April). Monthly payments are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Third and fourth students from one family will be charged \$30/month.

If you have any questions or comments about tuition payments, please contact the Administrative Director. Families, who do not pay tuition on time or fail to make other arrangements with the Administrative Director, jeopardize their continued participation in the band.

### **Fundraising**

MHSB is a non-profit organization and fund raising is one way to involve the community in our Band as well as earning money for instruments and other expenses. Optional fundraisers may be offered which would allow families to apply part of their earnings directly towards their tuition expenses.

### **Accountability**

Each family must submit a copy of the letter from their Accountability Group, verifying their home school status by the first day of band, preferably with your Registration Form. At least one parent and all participating students from each family need to read the handbook and sign the Commitment of Participation. Parents have to indicate their Booster Club Volunteer Position on registration.

All MHSB families must meet the following requirements set forward by the South Carolina Band Directors Association (SCBDA) for students wishing to participate in their Region and State events.

- Be part of a home school band
- Provide evidence of membership in an accountability group
- Register for the event through your Band Director

### **Parent and Alumni Musicians**

Parents and MHSB alumni are invited to play with the band at no cost. However, they cannot be included in SCBDA sanctioned competitions due to the restrictions on these competitions.

### **Booster Club**

Each family participating in the band program is a part of the Booster Club and is required to volunteer with the band in some capacity.

Administration Committee: Provides an information center at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church and other band events; assists the Director of Bands with administrative tasks, collects fundraiser, registration and tuition payments, handles registrations, etc.

Promotion & Communication Committee: Promotes and advertises the band, handles printed materials (newsletters, event flyers, e-mails), manages the website (with BOD supervision)

Set-Up Crew: Concert and performance trip arrangements, set up and clean up, including transporting instruments to off site performances.

Fundraising Committee: Directs fundraising by selecting fund raisers, announcing these to the band and tracking and communicating fundraising status. Some past fund raisers include ETC Coupon Books, Concert Program Ads and Applebee Pancake Breakfast.

Special Events Committee: Organizes special events including the Band Banquet, Appreciation Luncheon, Music Fair, band fellowship events, concert refreshments, etc.

### **Dress Code**

MHSB is a Christian home schooled student's band. Each individual in the band not only represents himself and his family, but also MHSB. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child's clothing provides a fitting testimony to a Christian home school. We should honor the Lord through what we wear. Outfits that are too tight, short, low, loose, torn, contain inappropriate messages, and accessories that attract undue attention are not acceptable.