

# Unity East Band Handbook

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Welcome to the Unity East Band! We are excited you decided to be part of our team! Please read over this handbook for details about the program, and sign and return the last page to Mrs. Fenoglio before your child's first day of band.

### **When Does the Unity East Band Meet?**

Band students are split into specific instrument groups. Your child will be a part of one specific group that will meet once per week for 25-minutes during the school day. You will be sent an updated schedule if any changes are made to the schedule throughout the year.

After a few months of lessons, the full band will begin to meet together during the school day as well, and students will need to bring their instrument twice per week (lesson and full-band). \*This is tentative due to COVID and spacing.

### **Home Practice**

Because we have very limited band instructional time, it is important that your child practice at home regularly. When students meet for a group lesson, they will learn something new. In order for your child to make progress and be successful, they need to practice each week to master the previous lesson and be ready for a new lesson the following week.

Students should practice 20-minutes per night, 3 nights per week for a total of 60-minutes. However, improvement is more important than time! Everyone is different! It may take one student 10-minutes to play a song well, but it may take another student an hour! Be patient!

Students will be required to take their instruments home the day of the lesson so they have it at home to practice.

### **Practice Tips**

- 1.) Practice what the teacher has assigned first.
- 2.) Don't tackle the whole song at once. Practice 2-4 measures at a time.
- 3.) If you make a mistake, don't start the song over from the beginning. Only work on the section(s) that give you trouble.
- 4.) Practice slowly and correctly. Then, speed it up!
- 5.) Play for friends and family.

**Parental Involvement=Success!**

You do not have to be musically inclined to help your child succeed in music! Believe in them! Encouragement is the best tool. Instead of harping on them to practice each day, make it fun! Remember, they joined band because they wanted to have fun learning to play an instrument!

Students typically enjoy practicing their instrument at first because it is new. After the newness has worn off, students may wish to practice less because it is hard work to stay dedicated, but without regular practice, a student will struggle and become less confident, making the band experience less enjoyable. This hard work WILL be worth it! Students have fun when they are successful and take pride in what they have accomplished.

SHOW AN INTEREST! If your child believes you enjoy that they play an instrument, they will enjoy it more and will work harder. Ask them to play a song they were assigned before and after they have practiced it. If they practiced efficiently (\*see practice tips above), it should have improved. You may even create your own practice reward system at home. Always keep it positive rather than negative!

**Practice Cards**

Students will be given a practice card at each weekly group lesson. This card will include the weekly practice assignment. Students and parents should complete written minutes and signatures with pen. Students are required to return the completed card (with parent signatures) at their next group lesson. Practice cards help students set and reach goals, and they get parents involved. Only a parent or a monitoring adult should sign the card. Older sisters and brothers will not be permitted to sign.

**Practice Awards**

Top practicers will be awarded at the Spring concert for their efforts.

**The Band Commitment**

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to be in band and experience all the joy it can bring. Once a student starts band at the beginning of the school year, Unity East has the expectation that students complete the year. When students quit during the school year, this negatively affects everyone in the band. Each person has an important role, and quitting disrupts the flow of learning for the entire group, causing instability. Band is a great opportunity to teach students about following through with commitments and teamwork.

**Switching Instruments**

Once an instrument is chosen, students will not be permitted to switch instruments. All instruments are different, and switching to another instrument means starting from the beginning again. Because of the way group lessons are designed, catch up lessons are unavailable. The only permitted circumstances are if Mrs. Fenoglio witnesses a student is unable to experience success on an instrument and believes success could be attained with a different instrument or if the band is lacking a needed instrument type. Mrs. Fenoglio will call and speak with parents/guardians for either of these circumstances.

### **Phone Calls for Forgotten Items**

If a student has forgotten their instrument or music, they may ask their teacher if they can go to the office and call PRIOR to 8:25am. Phone calls after 8:25am will not be permitted as this disrupts instruction. Classroom teachers and the office have the right to deny phone usage. If the student forgets their instrument or music on a regular basis and is asking to call too often, the student may be given phone limitations or may be prohibited.

### **Forgotten Instrument Guidelines**

Your child will need to bring their band instrument and music EVERY time they have a lesson and/or full band. Because we learn something new each week, students cannot afford to miss. This puts the student behind and causes the rest of the group to have to backtrack for re-teaching. To teach the importance of learning and student responsibility, Unity East has the following disciplinary actions set for forgotten instruments/materials or forgotten lessons.

1<sup>st</sup> time: Verbal warning to student

2<sup>nd</sup> time: 2nd Verbal warning to student

3<sup>rd</sup> time: Note sent home with the student requiring a parent signature

4<sup>th</sup> time: Phone call home

\*Mrs. Fenoglio will call the number(s) listed on the band enrollment form. A message will be left if you are unavailable.

5<sup>th</sup> time: Mrs. Fenoglio will call home to set-up a time for the student to practice at school (before or after) to make-up for lost time.

6<sup>th</sup> time: Office Referral

7<sup>th</sup> time: Dismissal from the band program

### **Absent Make-Up Lessons**

When possible, Mrs. Fenoglio may schedule make-up lessons for those that were absent and missed a lesson. She will notify the student so they are prepared to bring materials to school. Make-up lessons are not provided for those that forgot an instrument or forgot to attend their lesson.

### **What to Bring to Each Lesson**

-Instrument

-GOOD reeds☺, oil, swabs, neck strap,  
etc.

-Music folder (includes book, music, etc.)

-Parent/guardian signed practice card

-Pencil

### **Grading**

Grades are not given for band at Unity East. However, you will be updated during report card time on your child's progress.

### **Performance Philosophy**

Performance is an integral part of course expectations and directly relates to classroom learning and instruction. Attendance at performances is necessary to finalize and complete the standard art cycle of create, learn, and perform, which is an inherent component in all performing arts courses. Performance in the arts culminates the activity

portfolio of classroom learning. Group success in a performance setting relates directly to individual student responsibility and achievement.

### Performance Policies

All band members are required to attend the band performance(s). The 5<sup>th</sup> grade band typically plays during one Spring band concert. The concert date will be outlined several months in advance.

The student must have been absent from school the day of the concert and/or have a doctor's note for it to be considered excused. Missing a performance without any prior notice is not only unexcused, it is unacceptable. To not show up lets the entire group down. Except for in the case of extreme emergencies, missing without any notice, will incur a parent conference. You will be notified with advanced notice if there are any alterations or additions to the band schedule.

Remember:

- Band members are not permitted to leave the performance before the group dismissal unless excused by Mrs. Fenoglio prior to the performance.
- Each band member is personally responsible for all of his/her own equipment during performance events, whether school or personally owned.
- It is the responsibility of each individual band member to keep him/herself informed of all notices and scheduled events and to bring notices home to parents.

### Performance Attire



A dressy outfit

\*must be appropriate according to school dress code



T-Shirts or Jeans



Dresses/skirts that are knee length if you this is your choice of attire.  
(Knee length helps when sitting.)

**Please Sign and Return this Page Only**

My child and I have read and discussed the band handbook together and understand/agree to all outlined policies and guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Print)

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

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