

## Twin Peaks Middle School Band Handbook

Welcome Students and Parents to the 2011-12 School Year at Twin Peaks Middle School. You are enrolled in a class that will help you develop a lifelong appreciation of music. The skills you will learn, including working in a large group, individual preparation, and classroom discipline, will add to your development as a person. At TPMS we have two 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade bands, two 6<sup>th</sup> grade bands, a Jazz Band that is available through audition only, and a Music Appreciation class for non band students. Please take the time to read and understand the Band policies and grading procedures on the following pages. Also please take the time to investigate the new website. You will find everything you need to know about the Band Program. Learning Point will still be used to post updated grades.

### Student Responsibilities

1. Bring your instrument every day that you have band and make sure it is in good working condition at all times. Instrument cases need to be clearly labeled with your name and band in bold letters, for example ***Fred Smith 6<sup>th</sup> Grade band period 5***. You can also use a luggage tag. Twin Peaks does have a limited amount of extra instruments (including drum sticks) for the students to use during the school year. Please contact me as soon as possible if you need to borrow (We do not charge for the use of a school instrument but you are responsible for its care while it is checked out to you, including the cost of any repairs the instrument might need throughout the school year) a school instrument.
2. All students are required to have a 1 inch **three ring binder** with their name in big letters.
3. All students are required to bring their own music to class and are responsible for all materials given to them in class. I will supply all students with one copy of music and handouts. Do not rely on your stand partner to bring their music ***\*\*\*Replacing any lost papers, music, or materials will be the responsibility of the student\*\*\****
4. All students **will** have a **pencil** to take notes, mark fingerings, slide positions or other helpful notation. Student's music will be checked to make sure they are marking their parts appropriately.
5. **PRACTICE.** Your main homework assignment for the year is to learn your music. You are responsible for all the music in your folder, including scales, chorales, and rhythm studies. Occasionally you will be called on to perform your instrument in class. Students will also have occasional homework assignments on theory and music vocabulary. Please read the section on testing later in the handbook.
6. All Percussion/Mallet players must provide their own drum sticks, two pairs of mallet sticks (soft and hard), and timpani sticks. I will provide the drum equipment. *Nick Rail Music* carries the Innovative Percussion Intermediate set which also includes a drumstick bag.) 6<sup>th</sup> Grade percussion students will have a *required* drum class (before school, once a week) in the month of

September. Please label all of your sticks. If you have any difficulty in purchasing the sticks please notify me.

### **Classroom Procedures**

Students will enter and leave the band room quietly.

Before class starts wait for teacher directions before playing any instrument/equipment. Make sure equipment is working before class starts.

If you are borrowing a mouthpiece make sure you sanitize it before you play.

Raise your hand to ask a question, use restroom, or get Kleenex.

If you need to leave in the middle of class or enter late, please wait until there is a pause in the rehearsal. Do not try to enter the band while everyone is playing. You do not want to accidentally bump someone while they are playing and do damage to their instrument or face.

"Down time" will be provided between songs.

Watch the Baton.

### **General Rules for the Band Room**

Be respectful.

No playground behavior in the band room.

Keep the band room clean.

Play your instrument at appropriate times and volumes.

Have Fun.

### **Specific Rules for the Band Room**

Be prepared for class.

Listen to instructions the first time they are given.

No food or Gum in the band room.

Change tasks quickly and quietly.

Do not touch what does not belong to you.

## Testing

We are a team and every student is important to the Bands success. Band is more enjoyable for everyone involved if students practice and learn their scales and music at home. The more students practice the smoother (or smooover) classroom rehearsals will run. We would not have to stop so much and repeat the same warm-ups or sections of music. This would also allow us to play more challenging music. With the rotating block schedule if you do not practice what you learned in class on Monday then by Wednesday's class you most likely will have forgotten what you learned. Therefore, I will be testing the students during class to make sure they know their scales and music. The students will receive their concert music (or know what scale they need to learn) a minimum of four weeks before they will be tested on it. If you need help you can always come in before school, after school (by appointment only), and the band room is always open during RAM/lunchtime. Students who do not do well on the tests will come in during RAM/Lunch time to practice and/or practice cards will be assigned. They will re take the test until they pass it because I believe all students can be successful in music.

I am aware that I have bands with students with different level of abilities in them. Especially in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade bands where I will have beginners and student's who have been playing their instrument for two or more years. Each Band and student will be tested at their appropriate level.

We will test for chair placements at the beginning of the year but that process is not for a grade. It is to hear what you do well and what you need to work on. Do not be discouraged if you end up in a low chair position. You will not receive an "F" because of what chair you are in. I am more interested in your progress throughout the school year. There will be chair challenges where a student can move up in the section. In years past I have students move up over 8 chairs in the course of a year. Also, I reserve the right to move a student up or down based on in class behavior or improvement (or lack of improvement) on their music.

## Concerts

1. Concerts are **mandatory** (except the amusement park festivals). The concert schedule is on the website. I realize conflicts do happen, please give me at the minimum, two weeks' notice and I will do everything possible to accommodate you. I also realize emergencies (broken bones, sick, death in the family, etc.) occur and I will do everything to assist you in these situations. Missing a concert drops your overall letter grade by 30%. We are a team and everyone is important in helping us perform to our best.

2. In order to perform a concert you must demonstrate that you have learned your music. During class I will use ongoing assessments to determine if students are proficient on their music. A

phone call home will be made at least two weeks before a performance if a student is not properly prepared or has been demonstrating poor behavior choices.

3. Concert dress: A big part of performing is dressing nicely. The dress requirement for all concerts (except the amusement park festival) is that the boys wear nice black dress pants, black dress shoes, with the Twin Peaks Band Polo shirt. The dress for girls is black dress pants or a black dress that goes below the knee when seated, black shoes, along with the Twin Peaks Band polo shirt. **No jeans, white socks, or tennis shoes.** Please contact me if you need assistance in purchasing concert clothes.

3. Each year all band students have the opportunity to participate in our Amusement park field trip. We perform a concert and then spend the rest of the day in the amusement park. Participating on this field trip is a privilege and not a right. In order to participate in a field trip you must have an "A" and "Gs" or better in citizenship and effort in band class. Also, students must have grades of C or better in their other classes and NO "Ns" or "Us" in citizenship or effort. Failure to do so is cause for your exclusion from the field trip. When we perform we represent not only ourselves, but Twin Peaks Middle School and the Poway Unified School District.

## **How you receive your Citizenship and Effort Grade in Band**

### *Citizenship Grade*

Any unnecessary talking or behavior will lower this grade. During rehearsal you are expected to be quiet and courteous to all students in the classroom. Frequent talking or disrupting class will result in coming in during Lunch time.

**O** = Outstanding: Student does not talk in class and is on task.

**G** = Good: Some minor talking and/or off task behavior but not enough to cause a disruption in class.

**S** = Satisfactory: Some occasional talking and the student has been told to stop talking by instructor more than three times in a quarter.

**N**= Needs Improvement: Student is talking in class and/or off task numerous times.

**U** = Unsatisfactory: Student frequently talks and disrupts class.

Students in danger of receiving an N or U will receive a phone call home.

***Effort Grade***

Frequently forgetting your instrument or music will result in the student coming in during Lunch time.

**O** = Outstanding: Student is prepared for every class and has shown improvement on their music.

**G** = Good: Student has forgotten either their music or instrument on two occasions.

**S** = Satisfactory: student has come unprepared to class and has forgotten their music or instrument three times in a quarter.

**N** = Needs Improvement: Frequently unprepared for class and has forgotten their music or instrument four times in a quarter.

**U** = Unsatisfactory: Unprepared for a class five or more times during a quarter.

Students in danger of receiving an N or U will receive a phone call home.

If your instrument is being repaired please give Mr. Moreau a note with the name of store and the estimated return time. These are excused and will not count against your effort grade.

***Letter Grade***

The overall breakdown is as follows.

**Citizenship 25%**

**Effort 25%**

**Concert 30%**

***\*\*Performance evaluations, scale and other music tests or assignments 20%\*\****

***\*\*\*Missing any concert will cause your grade to drop 30%\*\*\****

Students in danger of receiving a "D" or "F" will receive a phone call home.

## Switching Instruments

We are always in the need of more low brass players and double reed (bassoon and oboe) musicians. We have the following instruments available to switch to and borrow:

Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone, and Tuba. All instruments have been worked on over the summer to make sure they are in good working order and the condition of each instrument has been documented. **\*\*\*Replacing or repairing any instruments borrowed from the school will be the responsibility of the student\*\*\***

If your son or daughter would like to play one of these instruments please have them talk to Mr. Moreau. We have plenty of these instruments and mouthpieces available for a student to give a trial period to decide if it is the right one for them. In the past we have found that clarinet students have had success switching to oboe, bassoon, and bass clarinet. Alto saxophone students have switched to Tenor Saxophone or baritone Saxophone. Flute students have changed to low brass and Trumpet players have switched to French horn and low brass. If you need to use a school instrument, you accept the responsibility of maintaining and keeping the instrument in good working condition.

## Reed and mouthpiece recommendations

These are only recommendations and should not be seen as set in stone, each child is different.

**Woodwind** players should have at least four extra reeds in their case at all times. Some reeds are defective and it isn't obvious until they are used. The following are recommended reeds:

**Clarinet** 6th Grade: Mitchell Lurie 3 or VanDoren 2.5

7th Grade: Mitchell Lurie 3.5 or VanDoren 3

Advanced: Mitchell Lurie 4 or VanDoren 3.5

**Saxophone** 6th Grade: LaVoz Medium Soft or VanDoren 2.5

7th Grade: LaVoz Medium or VanDoren 3

Advanced: LaVoz Medium Hard or VanDoren 3.5

**MOUTHPIECES:** If your instrument uses a mouthpiece, and you are still playing on a mouthpiece that came with your instrument, Mr. Moreau highly recommends the following mouthpieces to help with better tone quality and control of your instrument. Students will need these mouthpieces for high school.

**Clarinets:** VanDoren B45

**Saxophones:** Selmer C star

**Trumpet:** Bach 5C or 3C

**French Horn:** Schilke 31

**Trombone:** Bach 6.5 AL (check for shank size Small or Large)

**Baritone:** Bach 6.5 AL

**Brass** players should always have valve oil and or slide cream (trombones also need water spray bottle).

### **How Parents can help keep students motivated**

1. Help your child while they are practicing or just listen in. Students should be practicing a minimum of 15 minutes a day.
2. Praise them while they are practicing.
3. If the student is struggling do not hesitate to call or email me. Encourage your child to either ask for before/after school tutoring or start taking private lessons.
4. Make sure your student uses their practice time effectively. Use a room that has no distractions (no TV, iPods, or cell phones). Help them identify what they need to practice and focus on one musical aspect at a time. Remind them to do their warm-ups and scale exercises. Always save time to practice the songs they enjoy playing.

### **Private Instruction**

I highly recommend all students take private lessons. In a band setting there is no way for each student to get the individual attention that they need. Private instructors will be able to help a student improve drastically and their enjoyment of music will also increase. There is a list of recommended teachers on the band website.

**Fundraising:** Thank you to everyone who donated at registration, it is greatly appreciated. We will continue with the restaurant fundraisers, Spaghetti dinner and some other activities. All of the money donated or raised will be used by the band exclusively. Donating money to the band program is not mandatory.

**Twin Peaks Band Boosters:** If you want more info on our Band Booster program or to find out how you can help, please contact our Band Booster President Mrs. Kay Lucas at [tpmsbandmom@yahoo.com](mailto:tpmsbandmom@yahoo.com).

TPMS Band Handbook

*Please email me at **amoreau@powayusd.com** or print **legibly** with your best email address to reach you so that I can send you important band information throughout the school year. If your email is the same as last year please indicate below. Please include your son or daughters name and what band they are in. If they are in Sixth grade please indicate which period. Also, extra credit for any mistakes you find in spelling (smoover is not one of them) or grammar in the handbook. Please mark them in the comments section.*

Please print, sign and return this page to Mr. Moreau by September 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> ..

We have read and understand all of the materials presented in the Twin Peaks Middle School Band Handbook.

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Comments/questions: