

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS - MIDDLE SCHOOL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

## Band and Orchestra

### 7th GRADE BAND

Seventh Grade Band is an ensemble that provides students with learning and performance opportunities on wind and percussion instruments. The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of basic skills begun the previous year that are necessary for effective instrumental music performance. In addition to large group ensembles, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in adjudicated solo and ensemble contests, honor bands, and private lessons. Topics/skills covered include:

- Embouchure and Tone Development
- Counting, timing, and rhythmic development
- Reading and notation skills, including sight reading
- Introduction of Scales
- Simple Music Theory
- Development of an extensive vocabulary of musical terms and symbols
- Ear training and listening skills
- Equipment care and maintenance
- Effective practice habits

Students in the Seventh Grade Band perform in at least two concerts a year. Although the curriculum is designed for students with one year of playing experience, students with no prior experience are welcome to participate. Beginners in seventh grade band must choose from one of the following beginning instruments: flute, clarinet, trumpet or trombone.

### 7th GRADE ORCHESTRA

Seventh Grade Orchestra provides students with learning and performance opportunities on violin, viola, cello and bass. The primary focus is on the development and expansion of basic skills learned in sixth grade orchestra which are necessary for effective instrumental music performance. In addition to large group ensembles, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in adjudicated solo and ensemble contests, honor orchestra and private lessons. Topics/skills covered include:

- Tone Development and Bowing Technique
- Counting, timing, and rhythmic development
- Reading and notation skills, including sight reading
- Introduction of Scales

- Simple Music Theory
- Development of an extensive vocabulary of musical terms and symbols
- Ear training and listening skills
- Equipment care and maintenance
- Effective practice habits

Students in the Seventh Grade Orchestra perform in at least two concerts a year. Since the curriculum is designed for second year players, beginners wishing to join seventh grade orchestra must take private lessons.

## **8th GRADE BAND**

Eighth Grade Band is the Middle School's most advanced performing ensemble for wind and percussion instrumentalists. This year long course introduces "comprehensive musicianship" through music performance of challenging and varied literature. Skills and concepts from the previous year are developed and expanded upon. In addition to continued refinement of individual performance skills, greater emphasis is placed on ensemble performance skills. Students will continue to develop their knowledge of music theory, begin to analyze and evaluate music, and use critical thinking skills to make refinements in their performance. Individual and ensemble performance skills will be expanded through musical expression and technical accuracy. Students in Eighth Grade Band will perform at least two concerts a year. Individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in adjudicated solo and ensemble contests, honor bands, and private lessons.

## **8th GRADE ORCHESTRA**

Eighth Grade Orchestra is an advanced performing ensemble for students playing stringed instruments. In this year-long course, students will expand their knowledge of skills learned in the previous year and will continue to refine their technical skills as well as enhance their performance through musical expression. In addition to continued refinement of individual performance skills, greater emphasis is placed on ensemble performance skills. Students will continue to develop their knowledge of music theory, begin to analyze and evaluate music, and use critical thinking skills to make refinements in their performance. Students in Eighth Grade Orchestra will perform in at least two concerts a year. Individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in adjudicated solo and ensemble festivals, honor orchestra, and private lessons.

## **1st YEAR BAND AND ORCHESTRAS (7th grade)**

1st year band and orchestra classes are designed for students who are interested in starting an instrument for the first time in the seventh grade. The primary focus for this class is on basic instrumental skill development and music reading. The goal of this class is to develop the student so they can enter into 8th grade band or orchestra the following year. Only the following band instruments are offered to beginners in the 7th grade: flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone. The following string instruments are offered: violin, viola, cello and bass. Students participating in this class are encouraged to take private lessons to accelerate their skill development to make them more confident when they join the 8th grade band and orchestra classes.