

Granger
Jr. High School
Instrumental Music

Student Handbook



Director: Brett McCarty

The GJHS Instrumental Music Program

The Granger Jr High School Instrumental Music Program provides an opportunity for students to develop an appreciation for music and encourages the skills and discipline necessary for achieving musical success throughout a lifetime of experiences. Students learn the importance of a cooperative team effort while working with fellow members to accomplish the shared goals of the ensemble. Music students have fun meeting new friends, and performing in different settings. In addition the programs challenges students in areas of personal growth and musicianship.

The Granger Music Program is composed of members of the Band, Guitar and Music Technology classes. Each group has numerous opportunities to perform during the school year. Students will perform at coffee concerts, band pageant, school assemblies, end of semester concerts, festival, and promotion depending on their involvement in the program.

A Note from the Director

The GJHS Music program focuses first on musical skill development and musical knowledge. We have a great concern for each student's musical values and musical growth both during their stay at Granger, and as they continue into High School. The success of the program centers around pride, commitment to task, and the willingness to work hard to achieve our objectives. As a member of the music program, you will make long lasting friendships, and develop a sense of fellowship that you will carry with you. We expect every student to establish both short and long range goals for improvement on their instrument. We also expect you to agree to perform to the best of your abilities and to work together with the director to make this year's group the finest that our combined efforts can produce.

The Information provided here is designed to help you understand the concepts and policies of the music department. I hope this handbook can be used to answer questions of both parents and students and will prove to be a helpful guide for defining the boundaries that are important for GJHS to have high quality performance ensembles. If utilized properly, the concepts of responsibility, teamwork, and good citizenship will develop as each student experiences the world of music. If you need information that does not appear here, please email the director, and I will try to assist you in whatever way possible.

Brett McCarty,
Director of Music

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Responsibility of a Granger Music Student

The emphasis of the GJHS music program is on striving for musical maturity. As a member of the of the Band, Guitar Ensemble, or Music Technology Ensemble, you are creating a tradition of excellence that will endure long past your time at Granger. In creating this tradition, you will have several areas of responsibility.

Responsibility to the school

As students of the GJHS Music Program, you are a representative of the GJHS student body, and the community as a whole. Part of our responsibility to the school involves supporting the student body at school-wide functions such as assemblies, back to school night, new student visits, award presentations and promotion.

Responsibility to Each Other

You have the obligation to respect the rights and feelings of others, both in and out of the classroom, and to treat everyone as you would wish to be treated.

Responsibility to the Ensemble

By participating in the music program you also agree, that you will spend your time and effort to be the best musician you can be. Every student is sacrificing something (Free time, study time for other classes, family time) in order to be a part of the program, you have the responsibility to respect each member of the program by giving your best at all times. This means: Practicing your instrument on a regular basis, and showing up to rehearsals/performances on time. Schedules of performances are announced well in advance of the performance. Please arrange your schedule to fulfill your obligation to the group. Attendance to all rehearsals and performances are mandatory.

Responsibility for School Instruments

By using a school instrument, you accept responsibility for maintaining it, and taking all precautions to see that the instrument is returned to the school in the same manner it was loaned to you.

Responsibility for Excellence

Musical excellence on the part of the individual affects the performances of the band and other ensembles. Working your hardest to maintain a level of excellence in your own playing is essential to the success of the program. Private instruction on your instrument is also highly encouraged, and a list of private instructors can be obtained from the director.

Procedures

- 1) **Students will be issued an instrument by the school.** Once they have returned the check out form, the students will bring the instrument, all relevant accessories, and their music book to each class meeting.
- 2) **All students will be provided ONE photocopy of their music.** If lost, originals may be checked out to re-copy. Originals used during class belong to the school and are on loan in the same way that textbooks are. Please mark in pencil only because they will be returned to the director.
- 3) **Clearly tag you name on the outside of student belongings.** Most cases look alike. You do not want someone to accidentally take your instrument home, and you don't want to take someone else's. Most instruments will be labeled when issued, but these tags will not last the entire year. Labeling your instrument can be anything from a luggage tag, or a piece of duct tape with your name on it.
- 4) **Keep your instrument safe.** Only open the case while at home, or in the music room, never on the bus or around campus. Never leave your instrument unattended if you carry it from home to school. It is YOUR responsibility to keep your instrument safe at all times.
- 5) **Instrument Storage:** The staff will make every effort to keep instruments safe in the music room. To facilitate surveillance, instrument drop-off begins at 7:45am. Students who go home before the end of the day, need to remember to also take their instruments home. No instrument should be left in the music room overnight.
- 6) **Make sure your instrument is in good working condition.** Learning to play an instrument is a challenging task. An instrument in poor working condition can lead to frustration and is often the cause of a student falling behind the rest of the class. Always have extra reeds, valve oil, etc. to avoid lost rehearsal time. Mr McCarty will be happy to check your instrument and can loan you supplies if necessary. Learning how to properly care for your instrument will be covered before the students begin playing.
- 7) **If your instrument needs repairs,** please inform Mr. McCarty as soon as possible. A loaner may be issued on an as needed basis.
- 8) **School Instruments:** The school has a limited number of instruments that will be assigned on a first come first served basis. If using a school instrument a signed *school instrument loan agreement* is required to accept responsibility for maintaining it in good condition.
- 9) **Switching Instruments:** Some students will be given the opportunity to switch instruments to some of the ensemble's less common instruments. These instruments when added to our ensemble, truly make a HUGE difference in the quality of our program and give the students a chance to play an important role in the ensemble. If the director asks you to switch, please seriously consider the opportunity with your guardians. Deciding to change instruments on your own requires a guardian note.
- 10) **A note from a guardian if a student is unable to participate in class.** Finger sprain, facial injury etc. are possible reasons from being excused temporarily. A doctor's note is required if unable to participate long-term (3 days or more)
- 11) **Practice school repertoire** at home a minimum of 4 separate days a week, for at least 15 minutes a session.

Classroom Policies

Set Up- The students may be required to assemble their chairs in the rehearsal set up. The students will be instructed as to the best way to set up the room for their rehearsal.

Switch up- Not every class has the same set up. Some classes may be required to arrange the room to fit their needs.

Floor, Chairs, and Stands- Everyone is responsible for their own chair and stand. This includes set up, and returning them to their racks after rehearsal.

Backpacks and cases- Backpacks and small instrument cases are to be stowed under your chair during rehearsal. Instruments with larger cases leave their cases along the outer edges of the room.

Warm Ups- Each rehearsal will begin with warm ups. This is where the students prepare themselves for the coming rehearsal, and are introduced to any new material to be covered.

Rehearsals- Refrain from talking and playing out of turn when the director steps on the podium.

Tear Down- Classes may be required after rehearsal to return the stands and chairs to their racks so that the classroom may be cleaned.

What did I miss? If you are absent, it is YOUR responsibility to see the teacher upon your return, to see what content was missed. This must be done outside of class time, as to not impact other students.

Raise your hand- If you need to get up from your seat in rehearsal, or if you have a question.

Hall Passes- Students are expected to take care of personal needs and/or business before or after class. However, if an EMERGENCY need does arise, students may sign-out, take the hall pass, and return promptly.

Personal Technology- Cell phones, ipod/ipads are permitted during class for SCHOOL USE ONLY. At no time are earbuds permissible unless specifically allowed by the director.

Advisory- Activities for advisory will be scheduled on a weekly basis. Activities may include (but are not limited to) Extra practice time, peer tutoring, full group rehearsals, and jazz rehearsals. Achieve 3000 will also be completed during this time. Students may take this time to take their playing tests.

Playing tests- Each Week students will take videos of themselves playing assigned passages from their music. These tests make up their performance grades, and maybe used to assign chair placement to students

Chair Placement- Each section of instruments has a section leader. This section leader is responsible for making sure that each member of their section has their music and instrument each rehearsal. They help the director with attendance, and if the music being played has a solo, the section leader is responsible for the playing of the solo.

Take Home Detentions- If a student is habitual in breaking class rules, additional take home detentions may be assigned. The work, including a parent will be due the NEXT school day. If a student is assigned a take home detention and does not complete it, they will be assigned 'O' room.

Concert Policy

Music is a performing art, each Granger ensemble will have several performances over the course of the school year. Music is much more than what happens between the bells of a single class period. There is no substitute for student participation at a concert. Think of playing in an ensemble like being on a sports team, it doesn't make any sense to attend every practice, but not show up to the big game. The ensemble is a team effort, and each student relies on the their fellow students to produce a performance after months of hard work and effort. Students are required to stay for the entire concert even if they only play for a portion of it. It is one way we show support for the other performance ensembles in our program.

Concert Attire:

In order to show how serious we are about creating a culture that treats music as something special, the music students at Granger dress for our concerts in a way that highlights how important we consider our performances. The performance attire for GJHS is as follows:

Gentlemen: White collared shirt, black slacks, black socks, and black dress shoes. NO sandals, athletic shoes, T-shirts, or denim of any color. The white collared shirt of the GJHS uniform is perfectly acceptable.

Ladies: White top, Black dress pants or skirt (at least knee-length), and black dress shoes.

Other arrangements can be made if students do not have the ability to acquire the required concert attire.

Missing a Concert

If some sort of circumstance arises that would prevent a student from performing at a concert, written explanation of the absence (The completed concert absence form) must be submitted two weeks prior to the scheduled performance. If an emergency arises, written explanation (the completed concert absence form) must be submitted the day the student returns to school.

Should a concert absence be deemed excused, the student will be assigned an alternate assignment to complete in leu of the performance.

Granger Music Time:

Early is 30 minutes BEFORE the call time

On time is 15 minutes BEFORE the call time

Showing up right **AT** the call time...**IS LATE!**

Granger Jr High School Instrumental Music Absence Form

This form must be completed and turned into the band office, either as a hard copy or by email, at least 2 weeks in advance of any anticipated absence, or within 1 day of an unforeseen emergency. If this form is not filled out and returned to the director within the timeframe, the absence will be unexcused.

Student Name: _____

Ensemble: _____

Today's Date: _____

Date of Absence: _____

Description of event Missed: _____

Reason for absence: _____

Materials Required

Students are supplied with an instrument and music free of charge for the entire school year. However, many of the instruments require accessories in order to function. Woodwind instruments require reeds, brass instrument require valve oils, and EVERY instrument requires cleaning equipment (swab/snake/brush). Do to the nature of this equipment, it cannot be reused or shared. The following is the recommended list of supplies by instrument:

Flute

- Cleaning Rod (Provided)
- Swab

Clarinet

- Swab
- Cork Grease
- Reed Guard
- Minimum of 2 working reeds (strength 2/2.5)

Saxophone

- Neckstrap (Provided)
- Swab (except Baritone saxophone)
- Cork Grease
- Reed guard
- Minimum of 2 working reeds (strength 2/2.5)

Trumpet/Baritone/Tuba

- Bottle of Valve Oil (Al Cass, Ultra-Pure, Yamaha)
- Mouthpiece Brush
- Slide Grease
- Snake

French Horn

- Snake
- Bottle of Rotor Oil (Hetman)
- Mouthpiece Brush

Trombone

- Snake
- Slide Cream
- 'Trial Size' Spray Bottle
- Mouthpiece Brush

Percussion

- Stick Bag
- Snare Drum Sticks
5A/5B or 7A/7B
****NO NYLON TIPS****
- Medium Rubber Marimba Mallets
- General Timpani Mallets

Guitar

- 1 Set Nylon Classical Guitar Strings
D'addario EJ27N
- 5 Picks
(They are cheap and get lost easily)
- Capo

Fundraising

To provide the highest level of instruction to Granger students each ensemble needs working equipment and up to date instructional materials. The classroom also needs many improvements in order to adapt to the changing technological needs of the students. In order to raise the necessary funds in order to provide the highest level of instruction, the music department takes part in various fundraisers over the course of the year. Below is a conservative list of the equipment in the room that needs to be updated, and the new materials that are required:

- Music Chairs (This project was completed in the 2015/2016 school year)
- Concert Bass Drum
- Replacing and repairing music stands
- Mixing Board (This project was completed in the 2015/2016 school year)
- Concert Marimba
- Suspended Cymbal Stand
- Instrument Cables x20 (Necessary for the music technology class)
- MusicFirst Music Software
- Marimba/Timpani Mallets
- Midi Cables x15
(We currently have midi pianos, that we can't use until we have cables for them)
- Capos x 30
- New Music for Bands
- New Music for Guitar Ensemble

Participation in all fundraisers is completely optional, but it is highly encouraged so that the music program can get over some of the hurdles that are currently preventing us from providing the highest level of education to each and every student.

Fundraisers planned for the coming school year are:
(but not limited to...more will be added as the year progresses)

- Cookie Dough Sales
- Band Pageant Ticket Sales
- Concession Sales at our concerts
- Possible Restaurant Nights

Donations of any amount at any time are welcome and greatly appreciated!

Grading

While courses are yearlong, grades are calculated on a semester basis

A+ = 97-100%	A = 93-96.9%	A- = 90.0-92.9%
B+ = 87-89.9%	B = 83-86.9%	B- = 80.0-82.9%
C+ = 77-79.9%	C = 73-76.9%	C- = 70.0-72.9%
D+ = 67-69.9%	D = 63-67.9%	D- = 60.0-62.9%
F = 59.9% and Below		

Grades are made up of the following categories:

- 50% Concert Attendance
- 25% Playing Assessments
- 10% Worksheets/Written Assignments
- 10% Daily Participation
- 5% Composer Poster Project

Concert Attendance:

Music is a performing art, and the each class is a performing ensemble. Attendance to concerts is mandatory, as each player is a vital member of the ensemble. The concerts are a culmination of all of the work done over the semester, and are a vital part of our program.

Playing Assessments:

In order to maintain a high level of performance, each member of the ensemble must be able to perform their music. Playing assessments will be given on a weekly basis, and will include the music currently being studied in class, scales, and other fundamental exercises.

Worksheets/Written Assignments:

Performance isn't the only way that student progress is assessed. Students will be given periodic written assignments and quizzes. These assignments are designed to measure a student's knowledge on music theory, counting, and the development on their individual instruments

Daily Participation

Musical development happens slowly over time. Each student's involvement in daily rehearsals is essential to their development on their instrument. The ensemble as a whole requires each player to be present, as it is the main time that the students develop a holistic understanding of playing specific musical excerpts, and playing as part of a group. Bringing their instrument and their music to each rehearsal is also part of this grade.

Composer Poster Project:

Students will work as a group to create a poster to represent a famous classical work or composer. This poster will be displayed in the room for the duration of the school year.

Parent Involvement

As a parent/guardian, you are vital to the success of your student. You are also vital to the continuing development of a musical culture here at GJHS. Your students will take a cue from you about how important music is in our community. If you don't value it, they are highly likely not to value it either.

Parents should encourage their children to achieve excellence in whatever they do. In the music program, promptness, commitment, practice and consistent attendance at both rehearsals and performances is mandatory and will require parental support. I'm sure that you will find, that supporting your student as they strive for excellence in music is also enjoyable as you will get to see your student grow and develop over their time in the program.

Here are some helpful guidelines to help you support your student to the fullest

- Student attendance is important- Don't allow your student to miss school or performances
- Students should practice as often as possible. (The minimum is 4 times a week for 15 minutes a session) Have your student play for you occasionally.
- Encourage your student to strive for excellence at all times. Good enough, is never good enough.
- Become involved in your child's music-related activities. Volunteering is a great way to become involved. Extra help is always needed!
- Attend music events, and make positive and encouraging comments about the performances. Our attitudes reflect on our students. What we value, they will value. What we are excited about, they will be excited about, which in turn will affect their dedication and effort.

Communication

Parent Meeting

At the start of the year, there will be an informational meeting for all music student parents. At this meeting, you will learn about all of the exciting plans for this coming school year, as well as many of the ways to help support the music program.

Email

When filling out the information page in this handbook, please include (write VERY clearly) your email address. This is the primary form of communication between the director and parents. Email allows for the inclusion of calendars for upcoming events, pictures of the students, and videos of their progress throughout the year. The director will send periodic emails home highlighting the progress of each ensemble. Email is also the quickest and most reliable way to get in contact with the director. Any question or concern sent by email will be addressed with a response within 24 hours.

Canvas

The students are using a program called canvas as part of their coursework here at GJHS. Each ensemble has a canvas page where students are provided materials, and assignments. It is also here, that they submit their videos and work for grades. You as a parent are invited to follow your student's progress on canvas, which will give you access to all of the information that your students receive.

Website

The music program is currently developing a website that will be home to all of the activities of the GJHS music program. When it is up and running, a notice will be sent home with your students.

Mr McCarty's email address:
james.mccarty@sweetwaterschools.org

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE PAGE:

Granger Jr High School Music Program

Student Name (First and Last) _____

I have read and understand all of the class policies

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

I have read and understand all of the class policies

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Home Address: (Street, city, zip)

Best Phone # to reach Parent/Guardian during the school day: _____

Best Phone # to reach Parent/Guardian during the evening hours: _____

Email: (Please write VERY clearly) _____

Primary language spoken at home: _____

Will you be able to help in any of the following areas as a volunteer: *(Please Circle)*

- Chaperone a field trip, event or performance
- Help on an as needed basis
- Photocopy help for Mr McCarty during the school day