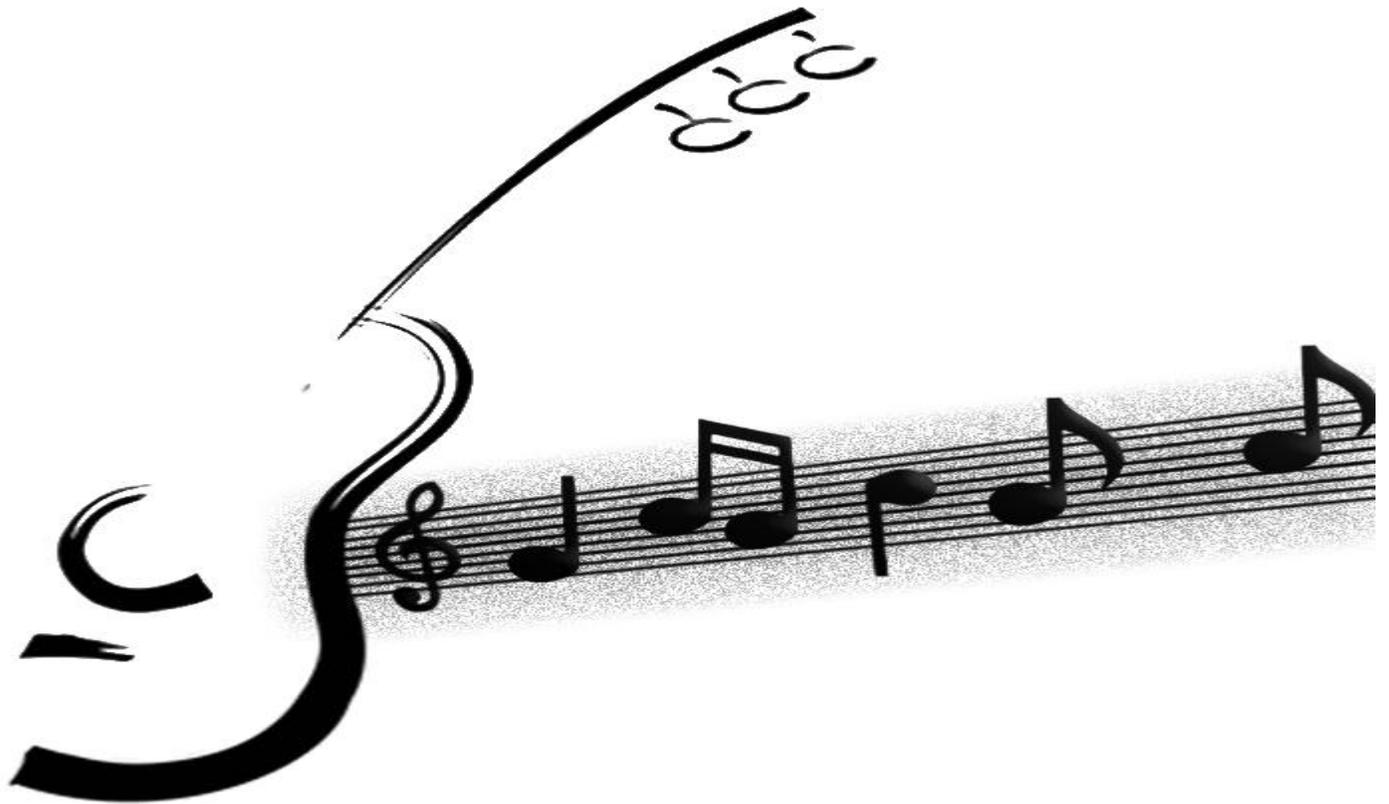


Elder Grove Middle School



2015 Music Department Handbook

Mr. Thomas Burke

Phone: 656-2893 ext. 117 Cell:970-581-5080

Email: burke@eldergrove.k12.mt.us

Mrs. Michelle Maurer

Phone: 656-2893 ext. 503 Cell:406-633-0118

Email: maurer@eldergrove.k12.mt.us

Introduction

Welcome back to school! We are looking forward to creating a fun, meaningful and positive musical experience with you in the Elder Grove Music Department in 2015-2016!

This handbook is provided to make your orientation to the Music Department a quick and easy task. Please read this handbook with your parents so that you may better understand our expectations and requirements for the best and most successful experience possible. The music program at Elder Grove Middle School welcomes all interested students in grades 5-8, with four different programs (5th grade band, 5th grade general music, 6th grade band/choir, and 7/8th grade band/choir). Please understand that as your music teachers, we have high expectations of you as a musician and student. Essentially, your participation in the music program is an indication to us, and to your fellow classmates, that you are willing to be committed, prepared, and ready to step forward with your very best effort. In doing so, the tradition of excellence will continue to thrive, but more importantly, you'll have a great musical experience, one you can treasure the rest of your life. We expect your best effort, attitude, and behavior during class and preparing performances. In return, you will have rewarding musical experiences, worthwhile rehearsals, and the pride that comes with being a contributing member of the Elder Grove Music program. Your talent and hard work can make this year at Elder Grove exciting, fun-filled, and musically enriching for all.

This handbook contains vital information regarding our entire music program and it is important that you read and understand it. Please put this handbook in a safe place so that you can refer to it when needed.

Feel free to come and talk with us about any questions or concerns you may have regarding our music program. Mr. Burke will be available after school, as well as his prep period (12:15-1:00). Mrs. Maurer will be available before school, during her prep period (8:10-8:40) and during lunch.

Mission Statement

Generations of Success-Striving for Excellence

The Elder Grove music program exists to assist students in acquiring a greater knowledge and appreciation of music through voluntary participation in either band or choir or general music. Our goal is to guide the musical growth of each participating student while fostering the fulfillment that is inherent in music making through the combined efforts of the individual student and the teacher.



Classroom Rules and Expectations

We are all here because we have something in common; we love music and enjoy playing our instruments, singing or learning about music together. How we sound as a group has a lot to do with how we work together. If you follow the class procedures listed below, we can maximize our potential to create high quality music as a group.

1. **Be Responsible:**

- You are responsible for making sure that you bring all of your materials for band/choir/music (instrument, pencil, music, books, lyrics sheets, practice slips, etc.)
- Please be prepared. This means you have already practiced the assignment before the lesson or rehearsal.

2. **Be Safe:**

- **Band Students: Instruments are expensive. Please be very careful with all of your equipment.**
- **Never touch instruments that do not belong to you. This includes school percussion instruments.**
- **Horseplay will not be tolerated.**

3. **Be Respectful:**

- Please respect your teacher and fellow classmates at all times. This means you should treat others as you would like to be treated. **Please remember that self discipline is crucial to the success of the entire ensemble.**
- Water only in the classroom. Other drinks contain sugar that coats your mouths and in turn, gets blown into your instrument or can compromise your vocal chords. Food is not allowed for the same reason. Please be understanding and remember to ***remove all gum and candy before you enter the classroom.***

In the event of a discipline issue, the following course of action will be used:

- 1st offense: Verbal warning
- 2nd offense: Loss of behavior/participation points/office referral form minor
- Continued offenses will result in administrative/parent involvement/office referral form major

Home Practice for Band Students

Student success in band is directly related to the quality and amount of time spent practicing outside of class. Practice is essential to building the muscles, abilities and skills that ensure mastery of the instrument. In the same way that a great athlete devotes many hours to developing his or her skills, so must the aspiring musician build the endurance needed to play his or her instrument. Students will be expected to practice 10 minutes a day, six days a week and will be provided practice slips to document time spent in practice. Students are required to have parents sign off on these slips. It is easy to find 10 minutes in a day and this is the required homework for this class. Frequent practice is the best way to form a daily habit which becomes second nature and the student will find they want to practice longer as they progress on their instrument. Life can get hectic, but making music practice a priority should be just as important as a math assignment. We thank you for your efforts and putting your best foot forward!

Student Practice Tips and Suggestions

- Establish a time and place that you will practice at on a consistent basis. Routine is good!
- Practice the parts that you struggle with, rather than what you can already play.
- **Use a metronome** to keep a steady beat/ this can be frustrating but stick with it, you will improve **immensely!!!**
- Break everything down by measure or beat until it is mastered.
- Always have your pencil ready for marking difficult spots.
- Have some fun by playing a favorite song at the beginning and end of your practice time.

Grading (5th - 8th Grade Band)

As with all other classes, band is a graded class. The following outlines the point system that will be used in student evaluation, based on four 8 week periods. I feel the process that leads up to the concert is as important as the concert itself.

Concerts: 350 points per concert: Students are required to attend all concerts throughout the school year. It is **crucial** to the success of the group that all students are present at all concerts. I understand that emergencies can occur and if this does happen, please call me right away. Excuses for missing concerts will be handled on a **case by case basis**. Concert make ups are required and can happen in a number of ways; either a single sided two - three page typed or handwritten paper may be submitted (this paper must highlight biographical information on a performer of your instrument or voice type, as well as your personal thoughts and inspiration). In lieu of writing a paper, a student may choose to perform a solo work in class as well as repertoire highlights (of my choosing) from the missed performance literature. If the student is a no show without an approved excuse, the student will receive no credit for the concert and can't make it up. Concert dates will be provided at the beginning of the year for the whole year, so there shouldn't be any conflicts.

Practice slips/theory homework: Students are required to turn in practice slips, due every Thursday at the beginning of class. Students are required to practice 60 minutes a week. A point is awarded per minute of practice. A huge component of understanding music and how to perform is studying music theory. Each quarter will include one or two music theory assignments as well as one or two ear training quizzes. These assignments can vary between 50 – 100 points. **Students may re-submit their theory assignments for a higher grade as many times as they would like! Please note that an ear training quiz may NOT be redone.** My philosophy concerning education includes mastery and life-long learning! I feel it is important that students know the material. Please encourage your child to re-submit theory assignments for a higher grade. I will let students know a date at the end of the quarter when all re-submittals must be completed.

Behavior/participation: This category is broken into three parts: five points for behavior/participation in class, five points for having an instrument in class, and five points for having a music folder and a pencil in class (both are required to receive 5pts). Tardiness will result in a loss of five points. Excessive tardiness will result in a loss of more participation points. **Behavior in class is a major part of the overall grade and it is expected of all students to be respectful and participate fully in class exercises.** If behavior becomes a constant issue, a letter home and/or phone call may occur.

Playing tests: Students will have at least two playing tests each quarter! These tests will also determine their chair order in class. Students will be given notice as to what each playing test covers and each test is worth 100 points. If a student is absent from a playing test, he/she must have it made up before the next playing test. Please have your child arrange a time with me to make up the test.

Grading (5th Grade General Music)

Homework: There will be various assignments throughout the year. Many of them will be done in class. There will be occasional assignments that need to be finished at home, please support your student in these efforts for the best possible grade.

Quizzes/Tests: Students will be assessed on music concepts learned in class through singing, playing instruments, written worksheets, and projects. Points will differ depending on the quiz or test.

Concerts: 350 points per concert: Students are required to attend all concerts throughout the school year. There are many wonderful opportunities in the community and we fully support those endeavors, however making school music programs and concerts a priority is essential to the whole group. If one person is missing, it makes a big difference, so having everyone there is so important. We understand that life happens and emergencies cannot be avoided. Please contact Mrs. Maurer if there is an emergency so we can discuss the specific assignment needed based on the student's needs and situation. If a student just doesn't show up for a concert without an approved excuse, the student will not receive any credit and will be unable to make it up. Concert dates will be provided at the beginning of the year for the whole year, so there shouldn't be any conflicts.

Behavior/participation: This will be broken into two parts: 5 points for behavior/participation and 5 points for having a folder and pencil for each class. If the student is absent, there are make up assignments that will be available to receive these points back. Tardiness will result in a loss of 2 points, and excessive tardiness will be 5 points.

Grading (6th Grade Choir)

Homework: Students will have various written assignments throughout each quarter. Due dates will be announced and given in class and will be posted on Mrs. Maurer's link found on the school website. Re-takes are not permitted, however corrections can be submitted for partial credit back for a better grade. Please turn in assignments by the end of class.

Quizzes/ tests: Ear training quizzes and vocal parts tests will take place throughout the year. One or two per quarter, and will cover vocal literature from class as well as ear development skills. They will be worth 100 points. There will also be a basic music theory test at the end of each quarter worth 100 points. Test dates will be given in advance.

Concerts: 350 points per concert: Students are required to attend all concerts throughout the school year. There are many wonderful opportunities in the community and we fully support those endeavors, however making school music programs and concerts a priority is essential to the whole group. If one person is missing, it makes a big difference, so having everyone there is so important. We understand that life happens and emergencies cannot be avoided. Please contact Mrs. Maurer if there is an emergency so we can discuss the specific assignment needed based on the student's needs and situation. If a student just doesn't show up for a concert without an approved excuse, the student will not receive any credit and will be unable to make it up. Concert dates will be provided at the beginning of the year for the whole year, so there shouldn't be any conflicts.

Behavior/participation: This category is broken into two parts: five points for behavior/participation in class, and five points for having a music folder and pencil in class-must have both to receive all 5 pts. Tardiness will result in a loss of two points. Excessive tardiness will result in a loss of 5 points. **Behavior in class is a major part of the overall grade and it is expected of all students to be respectful and participate fully in class exercises.** If behavior becomes a constant issue, a letter home and/or phone call may occur.

Grading (7th and 8th Grade Choir)

Homework: Students will be required to complete one or two theory homework sheets per quarter. Students **can re-submit their theory for a higher grade** an unlimited amount of times until the end of the nine week period. These assignments will be worth 50 – 100 points. Listening journal and other homework may be assigned as well.

Quizzes/parts tests: Ear training quizzes and vocal parts tests will take place throughout the year. One or two per quarter, and will cover vocal literature from class as well as ear development skills. They will be worth 100 points. Test dates will be given in advance.

Concerts: 350 points per concert: Students are required to attend all concerts throughout the school year. It is **crucial** to the success of the group that all students are present at all concerts. I understand that emergencies can occur and if this does happen, please call me right away. Excuses for missing concerts will be handled on a **case by case basis**. Concert make ups are required and can happen in a number of ways; either a single sided two - three page typed or handwritten paper may be submitted (this paper must highlight biographical information on a performer of your instrument or voice type, as well as your personal thoughts and inspiration). In lieu of writing a paper, a student may choose to perform a solo work in class as well as repertoire highlights (of my choosing) from the missed performance literature. If the student is a no show without an approved excuse, the student will receive no credit for the concert and can't make it up. Concert dates will be provided at the beginning of the year for the whole year, so there shouldn't be any conflicts.

Behavior/participation: This category is broken into two parts: five points for behavior/participation in class, and five points for having a music folder and a pencil in class (both are required to receive 5pts). Tardiness will result in a loss of five points. Excessive tardiness will result in a loss of more participation points. **Behavior in class is a major part of the overall grade and it is expected of all students to be respectful and participate fully in class exercises.** If behavior becomes a constant issue, a letter home and/or phone call may occur.

Late Work Policy: Assignments will be deducted **10%** per late day. Work is considered late when it is not turned in at the beginning of class. Turning it in later on the same day will result in a one day penalty.

Required Materials

A “rent-to-own” plan is the recommended course of action for the first year of study on an instrument. You may go to Eckroth Music or Hansen Music on Grand Avenue for more information. If you plan on using a family-owned or other instrument, please have it checked by an instrument repair technician prior to use. Every student deserves the opportunity to play on a quality instrument. **Instruments are due in class no later than Friday, August 26th.** If this is an issue, please feel free to give me a call.

- **Please note that we are beginning to develop a musical instrument inventory here at Elder Grove! I will keep you apprised to which instruments become available for students to rent from the school 📧**

MUSIC MATTERS!



All Band Students

Name tag or some permanent way to identify your instrument on the outside of the case

A folding music stand (with case) for at-home practice

Two (2) pencils

Metronome with front dial (the combined tuner/metronomes are too soft to hear when playing)

5th Grade Band

Essential Elements: Book One

6th Grade Band

Essential Elements: Book One & Book Two

7th/8th Grade Band

Essential Elements: Book Two & I Recommend Book

Flute

- Pad Cleaning Paper
- Cleaning Rod & Cloth

Clarinet

- Mouthpiece (Vandoren M13 recommended) & Ligature
- Reeds- at least four working reeds (a box of Rico 2.5-3 strength is recommended)
- Reed Guard- for storing four reeds at a time
- Thumb Rest Cushion
- Cork Grease
- Silk Cleaning Swab
- Mouthpiece Cap

Oboe/Bassoon (*due to its size bassoon will not be allowed in 5th grade band*)

- Two reeds (M.Soft recommended)
- Plastic prescription pill bottle for soaking reeds
- **Rico** Reed Guard- for storing two reeds at a time
- Seat strap (bassoon only)
- Crutch (bassoon)
- Silk Cleaning Swab (bassoon requires two swabs)

Alto/Tenor Saxophone

- Mouthpiece (Yamaha 4C recommended) & Ligature
- *Mouthpiece Cushion
- Reeds- at least four working reeds (a box of Rico 2.5-3 strength is recommended)
- Reed Guard- for scoring four reeds at a time
- Neck Strap
- Silk Cleaning Swab

Trombone

- Mouthpiece (Bach 12C recommended)
- Slide Cream and Spray Bottle
- Tuning Slide Grease
- Cleaning Snake Brush
- Cleaning Cloth

Euphonium/Baritone/Trumpet

- Mouthpiece
- Valve Oil
- Slide Grease
- Cleaning Snake Brush
- Cleaning Cloth

Instrument Maintenance

Brass (Trumpet, Trombone, Euphonium/Baritone):

- Empty water key after each use
- Wash mouthpiece with warm water and mild soap frequently
- Oil valves and grease tuning slides as needed
- Polish with a clean, soft cloth (no liquid polish)

Woodwinds (Flute, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone)

- Swab instrument after each use
- **Clarinet and alto saxophone only**, wash mouthpiece with warm water and mild soap frequently. Do not get cork wet on clarinet mouthpiece.
- Check pads regularly (do not get them wet)
- Check for loose screws
- Grease all corks regularly (flutes do not have corks)

Students are responsible for proper upkeep of their instruments at all times. Instruments kept in top condition are the easiest to play. Unannounced instrument checks may be conducted periodically! Instrument cases should be kept clean and free of unnecessary items as well. **Under no circumstance are any students to play instruments that do not belong to them.**

Concert Attendance Policy, Etiquette, and Dress

There will be various concerts throughout the year. **SEE CONCERT DATES BELOW. The attendance and participation in each scheduled performance is mandatory.** Please arrive 15 minutes before each performance in concert dress. In an emergency, every attempt should be made to call in an absence. You can call the director at school or at home. You can also call a friend in band to tell the director if unable to reach us. Grading policy with concerts is noted in the grading section of the handbook. **Students are required to stay for the whole performance even if their group has finished performing.** No points will be taken for religious observances. There may be additional performances (possible nursing home tour with MS choir, Montana Youth Sing, County Honor Band, etc.) they will be announced when they are finalized. If any conflicts arise with additionally scheduled performances please call or email me! As a professional musician, I strongly advocate performing and believe it is vital for each student's musical development, please contact me with **any and all** conflicts.

Proper dress attire is required for all band members participating in concerts to ensure a unified look across the entire ensemble. All band members are required to wear some combination of black and white or all black, unless we decide to do something different as a group. This **includes socks and shoes.** Young ladies should wear a dress or blouse and skirt that falls' to the knees *when sitting down*. Ladies may also choose to wear dress pants and a blouse. Young men should wear a button down shirt with an optional tie, dress pants, and dress shoes. Please **no shorts, blue jeans, sweats, tennis shoes, or t-shirts for any performance.** Also, please do not wear any item of clothing with writing on it. We are presenting a professional concert.

Pep Band

The seventh and eighth grade band will be playing for a few pep rallies that the school may have. They may also play at some sporting events if asked to do so. I am allowing sixth graders to try out for pep band. They will be given notice of dates when they become available.

How Parents Can Help

Student success depends greatly upon the level of parent involvement. A healthy working relationship between the parent, child, and band teacher are necessary. Even with no prior musical training yourself, you as a parent can do much to encourage your child's success in band.

- Show an interest in the musical study of your child.
- Help your child select a consistent daily time and place to practice that is free from distraction. Remain nearby during practice times to encourage and support. Provide a music stand and proper chair for your child to practice.
- Be especially patient and encouraging during the initial exploration phase (first few months). **Praise your child's efforts and achievements regularly.** Learning an instrument can quickly become frustrating without adequate support from home.
- Talk with the band director on a regular basis about your child's progress.
- Keep your child's instrument in proper working condition.
- Remember: The sounds will become more pleasant as time goes on. **I promise!**
- Encourage your child to perform for others when the opportunity arises, whether at home, school, church, or the community.
- Keep a record of the student's various music activities.
- Notify the teacher if your child is to be absent or tardy at rehearsals or performances.
- Teach your child to be punctual at rehearsals and performances.
- See to it that your child keeps up with classroom studies and makes up missed work.
- Discuss with the director anything that will help him to understand your child.
- Attend concerts and other events involving your child. Show your support!
- Volunteer to help with various projects needed for performances.
-

What to do if your child loses interest

Occasionally, students will become frustrated with progress on their instrument, especially when the newness ends. It is important to help your child through these situations.

- Discuss the situation with your child to determine why his/her interest is declining.
- Talk with your child's band director to see what might be done to stimulate interest.
- Encourage your child to continue for a specified length of time.
- Offer increased enthusiasm and support.
- Find new sources of inspiration such as live musical theater performances, different artist's recording, and concerts that feature your child's instrument. **YOUTUBE is a great source to help find inspiration.**
- Attend band festivals, college band performances, and community band and symphony orchestra concerts and allow your child to project his or her possible future musical experiences.
- Seek advice from parents of other band members.
- Find an older student mentor for support and musical interaction.
- Take your child to see a favorite movie, discuss the role of the music, and purchase a recording of the soundtrack for further family enjoyment.

2015-2016 CONCERT DATES

ALL STUDENTS NEED TO ARRIVE 15 MINUTES PRIOR TO ANY CONCERT

Fall Performance 5th-8th - Tuesday October 27th 1:30pm-Middle School Gym

Christmas K-1 - Thursday December 10th (could change) 6:30pm-West High Auditorium

Christmas 2-4 - Thursday December 10th (could change) 7:15pm-West High Auditorium

Christmas 5-8 - Tuesday December 22nd 6:30pm-Middle School Gym

***Barnes & Noble K-3, 5-6 (Non-Band) Saturday February 20th 10am**

4-8 Recorder and Band Concert Thursday March 10th 1:30pm-Middle School Gym

***Canyon Creek Music Festival Saturday March 19th**

***Honor Choir and Small Ensembles retirement home tour will take place in April. TBD**

(Students MUST attend Canyon Creek Festival in order to go on tour)

5-8 Spring Band 7/8 Choir Concert Tuesday May 17th 1:30pm-Middle School Gym

“Hats” Musical K-3 Friday May 20th 10am-Middle School Gym

“Summer Camp” Musical 4-6 Choir Friday May 20th 1:30pm-Middle School Gym

Middle School Band Plays Kindergarten & 8th Grade Graduation May 24th 11am and May 27th 6pm-Middle School Gym

* = Voluntary Event (Great Opportunity!)

***If you are interested in becoming a band music volunteer**, please indicate the way in which you would like to assist us ☺

Your help will be greatly appreciated!

- _____ Concert Organizer (publicity, programs, etc.)
- _____ Videotaping concerts
- _____ Telephoning
- _____ Decorating for concerts
- _____ Piano accompanist
- _____ Other

If you have volunteered for any of the above, please provide your phone number(s) where you may be reached.
Thank you!

Parent name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Student Information Form

Please sign and return this page to Mr. Burke/Mrs. Maurer on or before Tuesday, September 1st.

This is your first 100 point assignment in class

Student Name: _____

Address: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name(s):

Contact Phone Numbers:

Email address:

I have received the band/music handbook and I fully understand the content within. I understand that I will soon receive specific dates for mandatory performances in the class. By signing this form I agree to follow the rules stated and fulfill the duties required of me.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____