



TUSKAWILLA
MONTESSORI
ACADEMY

Beginning Band

Concert Band



Band Handbook

Welcome to the Band Program at Tuskawilla Montessori Academy. Here are a few things that will help you know what and why we do what we do in band.

Why Band?

Good question! The simple answer is that working at and learning a band instrument increases a student's mental ability across the board in all skill sets. For more information about that may I suggest a well done (short) presentation on YouTube entitled: [Music Advocacy Presentation](#). Simply type in those three words in the YouTube search window and it will be one of the choices that come up. The photo shows a picture of a brain node.

Our Goals in Band:

- Read and correctly interpret musical notation
- Learn the pedagogy of our instrument
- Learn to perform solo and with a group
- Listen, describe, and evaluate musical performance
- Learn self-discipline in personal preparation and group situations
- Learn to work in a group setting where every person in the group depends on each other to perform well.
- Develop self-esteem by working to achieve both personal and group goals.

Performances:

- Performances will be scheduled as far in advance as possible so that all may adjust their family schedules to make sure the band members attend. Listed below are three performances for the bands. Dates will be coming soon. Other opportunities may arise for small groups or full ensemble.
 - Christmas Program
 - Spring Program
 - Central Florida Private School Solo and Ensemble (usually the 2nd weekend in March)

The Solo and Ensemble above is optional but highly encouraged. Preparing for this event really helps develop the skills we are striving for. There is some extra expense involved; purchase of the solo or ensemble music (usually between \$5 and \$15) and the hiring of a piano accompanist (usually between \$30 and \$50). Transportation to the event is the student and parents responsibility. This event attracts approximately 120 students from private schools around Central Florida each year. They are judged by competent and professional band directors and/or private instructors. Awards are given for the entries rated Superior in the performance evaluation.

A word about performances:

Performances are a culmination of what we have learned. By the very nature of what we do as a band, we are less than 100% when one of us is missing. We are not like many sports where we have people on the bench waiting to come in to the performance. We practice with everyone and we perform with everyone. Also, we only perform as well as our weakest player. So everyone needs to do their best every day.

Think of it this way:

Band is easy to do poorly and hard to do well but the rewards are many and great!

Rules for our Music Room....Rules for Life

- All rehearsals should be treated like concerts. Sit up straight, feet flat on the floor, holding your instrument correctly, playing the best you can. You practice the way you perform.
- Be respectful of others. For example; someone may make a funny sound when trying to play something. We can giggle and then get back to work. But we do not make fun of them. We encourage them to keep trying.
- Only play the instrument you are assigned. If it is not yours and you don't have the band director's permission; **Don't Touch It.**

- We must keep the room neat and orderly: things put away where they belong, no trash on the floor, no food, drink, candy, gum, etc.,
- The instruments, chairs, music stands, music, etc. that we use represent money spent by people who sacrificed for you to be able to be the best you can be. When you respect property and possessions, you are respecting the people who provided that property and those possessions.
- Rehearsal time is precious. Think of it as “gold”. We need to work hard every moment we are in rehearsal to achieve our goals. So before rehearsal starts:
 - Go to the bathroom, don’t ask during rehearsal
 - Get a drink of water, don’t ask during rehearsal
 - Get your chair and music stand out
 - Get your band notebook out and open on the music stand
 - Get your pencil out

Practicing Your Instrument....Developing Your Skills

- Have a Practice Routine at Home
 - Find a place in your home that is yours to practice.
 - Oil your valves every day before you practice. Move your tuning slide every day.
 - Have a folding music stand to place your band notebook on. They are available from Allegro Music for between \$11.50 and \$17.95.
 - Use a straight back chair, a folding card table chair, or a desk chair so you can sit up straight just like we will when we perform.
 - Get out your metronome/tuner and practice your long tones, slurs, and scales in tempo with the metronome. Check your tuner now and then to see that you are playing your long tones in tune.

- Practice the parts of your music you can't play first. Break it down into small pieces, work those out, and start putting it back together again.
- Then practice the “fun” things you like to play.

Practice time should be a minimum of 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week.

- This year the Music Room will be open for pass offs from 8:00 to 8:25 AM every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. This is not chat time, relaxation time, meet your friends time, or daycare time. This is for band students (no friends or siblings) to come and Pass off their requirements. When they arrive they sign in and I call each one up to pass off. Students are allowed to practice while waiting to be called for their pass off.

Spectrum for Band

The Spectrum for Band is set up in levels with 9 requirements (pass offs) per level. Students are to practice and pass off a minimum of one requirement per week. That means they will pass one level per grading period. The requirements for pass offs come from their band book, Sound Innovations, as well as scales and performance music.

The minimum standard each 9 week grading period is to pass off 9 requirements. No matter what level you are on or where you are in that level, you will make forward progress on your instrument and earn a good grade in band if you can pass a minimum of 9 requirements each grading period.

I initial each completed requirement in the student's binder. When you pass a level you receive a colored yarn/ribbon for your instrument that matches the color of the level you completed. Many students pass more than 9 requirements per grading period and earn extra ribbons for each level completed. Grades are based on the number of pass offs completed each 9 weeks

The grading scale looks like this:

0 to 4 pass offs earns a zero

5 or 6 pass offs earns a one (1)

7 or 8 pass offs earns a two (2)

9 pass offs earns a three (3)

But only if you are at the correct level for your class

If you are not at the correct level for your class you earn a two-plus (2+)

If you are above the correct level for your class you earn a three-plus (3+)

If a student doesn't pass 9 requirements in a grading period, then they continue to pass off in the next grading period. Of course, they can pass off more than 1 requirement per week and that gives them a chance to catch up to the correct level.

Beginners must past the first four (4) levels of Spectrum in order to be in the Concert Band. It is my hope that all beginners achieve this goal by the end of the school year.

Most students pass more than the 9 requirements in a grading period. I have had students be 21 or 22 pass offs ahead by the end of a school year. That is almost 3 levels ahead of their class.

You must have passed the required pass offs and be able to play the concert music in order to qualify to play with the band in the concert.