



2017-2018 HANDBOOK



DIRECTOR: AMANDA JAMES

Ellis Band Students and Parents,

Welcome back to school for the 2017-2018 school year! I am very excited about this school year and all of the learning, performances, and trips that will take place.

It is really important that you and your student go over the band handbook together, and keep it for future reference. The handbook has important information in it such as: rules and regulations, calendar of events, grading, and helpful information. After you and your student have gone over the handbook, please make sure and sign and return the required form. This form is due back on Friday, September 1st, 2017.

Of special importance is the calendar of events for this school year. This calendar is also located under Band Calendar on the band website. **If there are any conflicts** between your student and our scheduled performances please notify me **NOW** so that we can better plan for the group and assist your child in doing any make-up work that may be required. Please note that some of these performances are required and graded.

Keeping everyone involved in the band program at WEMS is very important. Please visit our band website, www.ellismiddleschoolband.weebly.com, regularly to know what is going on with the program and how you can help and be involved in your student's music education. It is a great way to keep up to date with students' work, tests, concert dates and much more! This site is updated weekly.

Feel free to contact me during the school day at 336-998-9094 ext. 3456. If I am in class, please leave a message and I will return your call in a timely manner. The best way to contact me is via email at jamesa@davie.k12.nc.us, as I check it several times a day.

Thank you for your support of the band program at William Ellis Middle School and I am looking forward to working with you and your student. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any ideas, questions, or concerns.

Mrs. Mandy James
William Ellis Middle School
Director of Bands
jamesa@davie.k12.nc.us
336-998-9094 ext. 3456

Purpose of the Handbook

Welcome to the William Ellis Middle School Band! The purpose of this handbook is to provide each parent and band student an understanding of the policies and procedures of the WEMS Band Program. The music department at WEMS has established a tradition of excellence. In order for this tradition to continue, a student **must** be committed to the program. A student may **drop** band **only** during the first 10 days of school by filling out the appropriate forms. At this point the student and parent must have a conference with Mrs. James and an administrator. If you ever have questions, please feel free to contact Mrs. James in the band office at 336-998-2007 ext. 3456.

Mission Statement and Band Philosophy

It is the mission of the Ellis Middle School Band program to introduce students to a life-long understanding, appreciation, and learning in the world of music.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

—Aristotle

WEMS Band Expectations

Do Your Best At All Times!

Practice regularly at home! Students should take their instrument home every day! Your parents have invested large amounts of money in your instrument; you need to invest some time and effort.

Follow instructions the first time!

Take Pride In The Music You Play & The Band You Play With!

Respect Yourself and Others Around You! Do not be Disrespectful, Disruptive, or Destructive.

Be prepared and on time. You will need to have your instrument, a pencil, music, and any other materials needed at your seat.

Be a good ambassador of Ellis Middle School. There will be many occasions in which ensembles are performing in the public eye. While on trips each band student should do his or her best to represent Davie County and Ellis Middle School with honor.

Destruction of stands, music, chairs, instruments, etc... will not be tolerated.

Bandroom Rules

1. Students will follow all Ellis MS and DCBOE rules and policies.
2. Students will exhibit good rehearsal etiquette.
3. Students will enter and exit the room in an orderly fashion.
4. Students will be courteous and treat others with respect.
5. Students will help to maintain a clean and organized Bandroom.
(This means no gum, food, or drinks in these areas!)

Class Materials

All students are required to have:

- 6th Grade Band - Tradition of Excellence Book 1
- 7th/8th Grade Band –Chromatic Tuner (can be on a smart device)
- 3 ring pencil pouch
- Pencil and Highlighter
- Paper
- 1” 3 Ring Binder
- Clear plastic page protectors (optional)

Specific Instrument materials—Most of these items come with an instrument cleaning kit, a rental instrument, or can be found at a local music store.

- **Flute:** Tuning rod and cleaning swab.
- **Oboe/Bassoon:** Two reeds with cases, case for water (an old medicine bottle with cap works well), pipe cleaners, cork grease, and cleaning swab. Bassoons must also have a seat strap.
- **Clarinets:** Ligature, three (3) reeds, reed case, cork grease, and cleaning swab.
- **Saxophones:** Ligature, three (3) reeds, reed case, cork grease, cleaning swab and neck strap.
- **Trumpet:** 3c or 5c mouthpiece, valve oil, mouthpiece brush, and snake. All valves and slides should be clean and free moving.
- **Horn:** Rotary oil, mouthpiece, and mouthpiece brush.
- **Trombones:** Slides should be clean and free moving. Slide Grease and a small water spray bottle
- **Baritone/Tuba:** Valve oil, mouthpiece, and mouthpiece brush.
- **Percussion:** All percussionists are required to have a bell kit, stick bag, pair of Vic Firth Snare Sticks, xylophone mallets, drum pad, and The Snare Drummer’s Toolbox by Row-Loff (Can be purchased from Mrs. James for \$15). Percussion students are responsible for keeping school owned percussion equipment clean and in good working order.

Grading Procedures

- A = 90-100**
- B = 80-89**
- C = 70-79**
- D = 60-69**
- F = 59 and below**

50% Performance Attendance. Band is a performance art! All concerts are mandatory. These are the finished results of your hard work and should be taken seriously. Each band member is a vital member of the band team. Missing one band member can have a large effect on the band. Please contact me if you foresee a conflict with a performance date.

10% Daily participation/Rehearsal Etiquette. To receive full credit, students must have all materials, participate and play to the best of your ability, and not disrupt the class. Students will receive a weekly rehearsal Etiquette Grade. Each week a student will start off with a 100 for their weekly Rehearsal Etiquette grade.

	Points Deducted Each Day	% of Weekly Grade
No Instrument	-10	50%
No Book	-5	20%
No Pencil	-2	10%
Behavior	-5	20%

Strikes will be given for Not Being prepared (i.e. No Instrument, Pencil, or Book) and behavior.

25% Playing/Written Tests and Instrument Inspections. Every Friday we will have a playing test of the material learned during the week. These tests are given to show the progress of the student's growth and to make sure that the music is being learned correctly. The written tests will be given as needed as an assessment for music history and theory. Instrument inspections will be done regularly. Students must have a clean instrument (no green gunk in slides/valves), the materials listed above for their instrument, their method book, a pencil, and their black binder with music.

15% Pass Offs. Students will be given a pass of chart for each 9 weeks with lines/exercises in their book that must be performed correctly. All pass offs for a 9 weeks must be completely marked off to receive full credit. Each line not signed off will deduct from their pass off grade.

Ways to Practice

Practice is the key to becoming successful in band. With consistent practice and repetition, you will learn to play your instrument well and enjoy your band class more. To make practicing more rewarding and productive use these practice guidelines.

1. Count and Clap all rhythms.
2. Name all of the notes. Use your fingering chart if necessary.
3. Clap the rhythm while you name the notes.
4. Do the fingerings/positions in rhythm.
5. Sizzle the piece, paying attention to tonguing and slurring.
6. Play the piece in small sections
7. Look at all markings (i.e. dynamics, style, road map, etc.)
8. Put sections together until you can play the entire piece.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are a great way to seek additional help on your instrument. ALL double reed instruments are highly advised to take private lessons. Because this instrument is so hard and rewarding, it is necessary that the student have extra help outside of class with a professional. If you are interested in private lessons please contact Mrs. James so she can give you more information.

School-owned Instruments

Students that are in need of a school-owned instrument need to let me know ASAP. We are limited in instruments that can be loaned to students. In order for these instruments to be issued, the school instrument rental form must be filled out and returned.

What to do if you are sick...

Sometimes, students assume that they cannot play an instrument if they have a cold or sore throat. On the contrary, for the most part, playing an instrument while slightly ill will not add to the symptoms. Each student is expected to play to the best of their ability unless experiencing severe pain or trouble breathing due to illness.

After being sick it is important to remember to clean your instrument out and wash your mouth piece and get a new reed.

If a student is too ill to play but not too ill to be in school, I must have a SIGNED NOTE from the parent for that particular day. For that day ONLY the note will excuse the student from playing and practicing at home... but not from participating. Students can still participate in learning through reading along, “ghosting” fingerings on their instrument and listening.

Attendance

It should be known that all Ellis Band students are required to attend all rehearsals and performances. Failure to attend rehearsals will jeopardize the student’s privilege to perform with the band and forfeit any awards or privileges.

If for any reason a student must miss a scheduled rehearsal or performance, he/she must inform Mrs. James in writing at least two (2) days before a rehearsal and one (1) week before a performance. If an emergency arises, you must inform Mrs. James as soon as possible, and upon your return to school, you will need to turn in a written excuse. Excused and unexcused absences are determined in accordance with the Ellis Middle School Student Handbook. An unexcused absence for a scheduled rehearsal or performance will constitute a reduction of the student’s grade, and can be made up with an alternate assignment.

Band Trips

The band will take a few trips within the school year. The following guidelines will be in effect on these trip. (MPA, County/District Auditions/Clinic, band reward trips & performances)

1. All school and band rules apply.
2. Follow all instruction from teachers and chaperones.
3. Stay seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
4. Remember that you are representing YOUR band & YOUR school.
5. Leave the venue we are visiting neater than when we arrived.

Uniforms

We want our ensemble to look their very best at all times. Please make sure that you are always looking your best when performing. School dress code is always in effect. Please keep this in mind when picking out your concert attire. Band T-Shirts are required and can be kept all 3 years. These shirts should be worn to any band function other than major performances.

Boys - Black pants, black shoes and socks, White button up long sleeve or short sleeve dress shirt, and a school colored band bow tie (purchased through the band).

Girls - Black dress (dress code length) or black pants/long skirt and black top black Shoes and socks (if needed).

Jazz Band

The Ellis Middle School Jazz Band will practice after school this year 2-3 times a month (days will be determined at the beginning of each month, trying to work with sport calendars) Remember that students participating in WEMS sports have the opportunity to participate in clubs and activities during a sports practice once a week without being punished. This ensemble is offered to 7th and 8th grade students. The group will consist of only these instruments: trumpets, trombones, alto saxophones, tenor saxophones, baritone saxophone, drum set, auxiliary percussion, piano, bass guitar and electric guitar.

If your instrument is not offered in jazz band then you can check out a closely related instrument to play in jazz band. This is considered an honors ensemble and students will be expected to act as leaders to other members and perform in the community at higher expectations. During the course of the year, the Jazz band will learn how to perform different styles of jazz as well as the history that correlates to these styles. This ensemble will perform at local events in the community, school events, band concerts, and at District Jazz Band events. Please see Mrs. James for more information regarding dates of performances and interest in the group.