



# Handbook

## Introduction

Welcome to the Taylor Road Middle School Band program. We are glad that you are eager to experience music and share your talents. This handbook is designed to answer many questions you may have about the band program at Taylor Road, and serve as a guide for many of the policies and activities that affect students.

## Program Overview

Approximately half of the Taylor Road student body is involved in music through participation in Band, Orchestra, Chorus, or General Music classes. Band is one of four music courses offered to students at Taylor Road.

The Taylor Road Band program has a total enrollment of approximately 350 students in grades 6, 7, and 8. From this enrollment are created six performing ensembles – The Taylor Road Green Band, Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble, Discovery Jazz, and Little “Big” Band.

The **Green Band** is created from two 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes. These classes are scheduled during the school day according to instrumentation. These are formal classes for which students earn full academic credit. Private instruction is strongly encouraged for all students.

The **Concert Band** consists of 7th and 8th grade students and is created by combining two grade-level Concert Band classes. Concert Band is a formal class for which students earn academic credit. Students are placed into the Concert Band by formal performance audition. Chair placements within each section are determined by the most recent full band playing test. The Concert Band performs primarily Levels 2 to 3 concert band literature.

The **Symphonic Band** consists of 7th and 8th grade students and is created by combining two grade-level Symphonic Band classes. Symphonic Band is a formal class for which students earn academic credit. Students are placed into the Symphonic Band by formal performance audition. Chair placements within each section are determined by the most recent full band playing test. The Symphonic Band performs primarily Levels 3 and 4 concert band literature.

The **Jazz Ensemble**, **Discovery Jazz** and **Little “Big” Band** meet outside of regular school hours and are open by audition only. Students do not receive academic credit for participation in the Taylor Road Jazz ensembles. Chair placements within each section are determined by audition.

## **Course Description**

Each band class at Taylor Road provides students with learning and performance opportunities on woodwind, brass, or percussion instruments. The primary focus is on the development and expansion of basic performance skills continued from the previous year which are necessary for effective instrumental music performance. Performing standard literature for young bands is the primary focus of each class and ensemble.

In addition to performing with the concert ensembles, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through private lessons, participation in solo and ensemble and various honor bands.

Topics and skills covered include:

- Embouchure and tone development
- Counting, timing, and rhythmic development
- Reading and notation skills, including sight reading
- Basic 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 band perform in public concerts scheduled throughout the year. The curriculum for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade is designed for students with previous band experience. Students with no prior experience are welcome to start band in 6<sup>th</sup> grade as beginners. Beginners may choose from one of the following instruments to learn: flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, or percussion.

## **Program Objectives**

The primary objective of the Taylor Road Band program is to give students an opportunity to express themselves musically through performance in band. Our nation's public schools have a long and proud tradition of quality school band programs, and it is the intention of the directors to give all students a positive experience as they become a part of this uniquely American tradition here at Taylor Road.

Due to the outstanding academic record of Taylor Road students, our school has been recognized in many areas. Therefore, it is also the objective of this program that band students perform at a level commensurate with this fine academic record.

# Curriculum

The Taylor Road Band program curriculum conforms to the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for Music Education, which is drawn from national standards as outlined by NAFME, The National Association for Music Education. The standards are listed as follows:

## **Creating**

Improvise, compose, and arrange music within specified guidelines.

## **Performing**

Sing alone or with others.

Perform on instruments through a varied repertoire of music, alone and with others.

Read and identify elements of notated music.

## **Responding**

Listen to, analyze, and describe music.

Respond to music and music performances of themselves and others.

## **Connecting**

Understand relationships between music, other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

The GPS Standards for Music Education can be viewed in detail at:

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Pages/Fine-Arts-Music.aspx>

Specific curriculum materials for the TRMS Band program are outlined per ensemble as follows:

### **1. Green Band (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

- Sound Innovations for Concert Band Book 1 – Standard Edition (Blue cover)
- Sound Innovations for Ensemble Development – Young Concert Band (Yellow cover)
- Grades 1 and 2 band literature
- Supplemental materials as distributed in class

### **2. Concert Band (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

- Sound Innovations for Concert Band Book 2 – Standard Edition (Red cover)
- Sound Innovations for Ensemble Development – Young Concert Band (Yellow cover)
- Grades 2 and 3 band literature
- Supplemental materials as distributed in class

### **3. Symphonic Band (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

- a. Habits of a Successful Middle School Musician – A Comprehensive Method for Years Two, Three, and Beyond
- Grades 3 and 4 band literature
  - Supplemental materials as distributed in class

Student Method Books will be included in the Band Participation Fee. All band literature is provided by the school. Students are responsible for bringing their method book and all issued materials with them to every class.

## Band Program Directors



### **Angela Reynolds** ([reynoldsa@fultonschools.org](mailto:reynoldsa@fultonschools.org))

**Angela Reynolds** has been Director of Bands at Taylor Road Middle School in Johns Creek, Georgia since 2015. She began her career in 1995 in southwest Alabama at Excel High School. She has also taught at Headland High School in southeast Alabama, at Leeds High School and Leeds Middle School both near Birmingham, Alabama, and at River Trail Middle School also in Johns Creek, GA.

A 1990 graduate of Sidney Lanier High School in Montgomery, Alabama, Mrs. Reynolds graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Troy State University in 1994. While at Troy State, she played saxophone and bassoon in the Symphony Band, Concert Band, and Jazz Band. She also served as section leader in the “Sound of the South” Marching Band. Reynolds received a Master of Music Education degree from Troy State in 1999.

Mrs. Reynolds’ professional affiliations include Phi Beta Mu, National Association for Music Education, National Band Association, Georgia Music Educators Association, Sigma Alpha Iota, Phi Kappa Phi, and Kappa Delta Pi. For contributions to music education, Mrs. Reynolds was awarded the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Association in 2010, 2012 and in 2020.

Under her direction, Mrs. Reynolds’ bands have received consecutive superior ratings at performance evaluations and have been featured as guest bands at the 2010 Georgia Music Educators In-Service Conference, the 2011 University of Georgia Middle School Band Festival, the 2013 Music for All National Concert Band Festival in Indianapolis, Indiana, and the 2020 Georgia Music Educators In-Service Conference.

Mrs. Reynolds resides in Cumming, Georgia with her spouse, son, and daughter and miniature dachshund.



### **Victoria Shrote** ([shrotev@fultonschools.org](mailto:shrotev@fultonschools.org))

**Victoria Shrote** is the Assistant Director of Bands for Taylor Road Middle School as of 2021 and will be co-directing the numerous ensembles Taylor Road has to offer alongside Mrs. Reynolds. She grew up in Milton, Ga, and graduated magna cum laude from Kennesaw State University in 2021 with a bachelor’s in Music Education. During her time in university, Mrs.

Shrote worked as both a marching technician and a private trombone instructor for numerous programs in the area. She was also a member of the KSUMB as a trombone player, performed in the jazz ensemble, and has performed with the KSU Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra throughout her entire university career.

Mrs. Shrote is also a member of Tau Beta Sigma, an honorary music service sorority. Here she worked as the Vice President of Services, the primary organizer of service projects and presentations. This included retirement home performances, elementary school educational presentations, Tri-M development presentations, and the KSUMB donation drives. She was also an elected member of SOMSAC, the school of music student advisory council.

Mrs. Shrote’s professional affiliations include Tau Beta Sigma and the National Association for Music Educators. She currently resides in Woodstock, GA with her husband and their pet birds.

## **Grading Policy**

Band students will be graded based on the TRMS Grading Policy which can be accessed through this link: [TRMS Grading Procedures](#)

## **Pass-Offs Assignments**

Green Band will play assigned lines from the book in class. Students will perform the line until they are able to play the line in its entirety without mistake. Once the line is performed in this manner, it will be considered passed-off. Students will continue through the method book in this manner. Students are expected to pass-off one line per week minimum.

Concert and Symphonic Band will play assigned passages from their concert music in the same manner as described above. Students that do not meet the requirements may not perform at the upcoming concert.

## **Help Sessions**

Mrs. Reynolds and Ms. Shrote are available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings beginning at 8:00 AM.

## Daily Classroom Expectations

To learn and achieve, students in band must meet certain expectations. Meeting these expectations will ensure a positive experience for all students in the classroom.

### 1. Be on time.

- a. Be inside the band room door before the bell rings.
- b. Be seated within one (1) minute after the bell rings.
- c. Be ready to play within three (3) minutes of the bell ringing.

### 2. Be prepared.

- a. Bring a complete instrument to class, including any spare accessories, such as reeds, valve oil, etc.
- b. Bring method books and all issued music and handouts to class.
- c. Bring a pencil to class.

### 3. Participate to the best of your ability.

- a. Demonstrate attentiveness to class activities by always being on-task.
- b. Follow instructions on the first request without hesitation.
- c. Start and stop playing precisely with the conductor's gestures.

## Classroom Conduct

Band students must always demonstrate respect for the learning environment. Behaviors that are distracting to the class are regarded as serious disciplinary infractions. Students are expected to meet all expectations in the TRMS Agenda and Code of Conduct. Within the band class, unsatisfactory conduct will be handled as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> infraction: Verbal warning and/or conference with teacher.

2<sup>nd</sup> infraction: Conference with teacher. Parents notified

3<sup>rd</sup> infraction: Public detention assigned. Parents notified.

4<sup>th</sup> infraction: Office referral.

In the case of behaviors which the teacher considers extreme, unusual, or which results in the destruction of property or presents a danger to any individual, the teacher may refer the student immediately to a school administrator, regardless of the number of previous infractions.

Students who present classroom disruptions may be temporarily removed from the classroom setting to minimize further disruptions. A parent-teacher conference may be required in some instances.

Students who continually present classroom disruptions will be deemed ineligible to participate in full band performances and must then perform a playing test in class the next school day after the concert which will stand in place of the missed performance grade.

## Chair Placement

Chair placement within each performing ensemble is determined by the most recent full-band audition. Playing tests used in place of a concert absence do not affect chair placement. Playing test scores not only factor into each student's grade in band, they are also used to determine chair placement within each section. Chair placement will be posted following completion of each full band playing test; however, individual student scores will never be posted publicly.

Students who fail to maintain satisfactory performance standards, or who demonstrate significant improvement in daily performance, may be accordingly re-assigned chair placement at the band directors' discretion. Additionally, students that do not maintain minimum performance standards on Pass Offs (80% or better on individual playing tests) will be deemed ineligible to perform with the full band in concert.

Individual playing tests will be given during each nine-week grading period. The date of the playing tests will be scheduled and made public. The following expectations will be mandatory for the playing tests:

1. There will be no exceptions made for not having an instrument to perform the test. If an instrument is sent for repair, a rental instrument must be obtained so the student may take the test. If an instrument is left at home, the student must make arrangements to get the instrument brought to the school or must borrow an instrument from a classmate. Failure to comply with the above criteria will result in the student receiving a zero on his/her playing test.
2. If a student is physically well enough to attend school, then he/she must take their playing test. Students that attend school with illnesses will not be excused from playing their test.
3. During the testing, students will be allowed one restart. Additional restarts will result in point deductions.

## Calendar of Activities

A calendar of band activities will be made available to students and parents early in the school year. All performances listed on this calendar are **MANDATORY** unless otherwise stated, and students will receive full academic credit (100 points) for each performance. Students who are unable to meet this requirement must perform a playing test for a grade in class the next school day which will stand in place of that missed performance.

Each performance will be preceded by a specified number of rehearsals held before or after school, which are noted on the calendar. Students must attend **ALL** rehearsals to be eligible to perform with the band at that concert. Students who do not meet this expectation must then record a playing test at home and submit electronically within 48 hours after the concert which will stand in place of the missed performance grade.

## Performance Grading Criteria

Students will be graded for performances based on the criteria listed below.

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Total Possible Points                    | 100 pts.                 |
| Point Deductions                         |                          |
| Late                                     | -10 pts.                 |
| Excessively Late (30 min. after arrival) | Not allowed to perform   |
| Talking/Playing/Misbehavior              | -5 pts. (per incident)   |
| Attire Infractions                       | -5 pts. (per infraction) |
| Incorrect Attire                         | Not allowed to perform   |

### Concert Attire

Girls      Black polo TRMS Bands embroidered shirt (provided to students with band fee), Black ankle-length skirt or dress slacks, Black dress shoes (with flat to medium heels)

Boys      Black polo TRMS Bands embroidered shirt (provided to students with band fee), Black dress slacks, Black socks, Black dress shoes, Black belt

- Do not substitute other colors for black and green
- Wear *dress* pants and shoes, *not* cargo pants, jeans, sneakers, etc.
- Students who are not dressed according to the guidelines listed above will not perform at the concert.

### Missed Performances

**Students who are unable to attend performances for any reason** must provide an explanation **IN WRITING** from their parents. In these instances, the student must record a playing test at home and submit electronically within 48 hours after the concert which will stand in place of the missed performance grade. Material for such playing tests will include the music performed by the band on that concert.

### Band Binder

Each student will be issued a folder in which to keep band music, method book(s), handouts, etc. It is the student's responsibility to take care of the binder and ensure items are not lost or damaged. The band binder may be stored in the student's folio storage space when not in use.



## Required Materials

Listed below are instrument brands recommended based on quality, reliability, and service ability. **BUYER BEWARE!** Brands other than those approved by the director should be avoided, as the quality and reliability may be questionable. Generally, discount and warehouse club stores' instruments are not of good quality and can present numerous problems in various areas. In addition, most music stores refuse to repair these instruments. Also, used instruments, particularly woodwinds, may need to be taken to a shop for repair and adjustments. Please keep this in mind and plan to have these instruments ready for the first day of band class with instruments.

**Disclaimer Alert:** The TRMS Music Staff **DOES NOT ENDORSE** any brand; the brands listed below are simply suggestions based on our experience.

**What to look for when buying an instrument:** 1. Does the manufacturer offer a 3 to 5-year warranty? 2. Is the store from which you purchased able to repair and supply parts? 3. How well does the instrument play and how well is it made? 4. Can parts be easily obtained? Feel free to reference directors' input before purchase.

**The accessories listed are the bare necessities. Please do not omit any of them.**

| INSTRUMENT                 | RECOMMENDED BRANDS   | REQUIRED ACCESSORIES  |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Flute                      | Armstrong, Bundy, Gemeinhardt, Prelude, Jupiter, Yamaha  | cotton handkerchief, cleaning rod, pencil   |
| Clarinet/<br>Bass Clarinet | Buffet, Bundy, Jupiter, Leblanc, Prelude, Selmer, Yamaha   | 5 reeds at all times, cork grease, cleaning swab, ReedGard (for reed storage), mouthpiece brush, pencil                                     |
|                            | <u>Suggested Mouthpiece:</u> Vandoren 5RV (lyre), B45, M13; Hawkins 'B'; Clark Fobes 'Debut'. <u>Suggested Ligature:</u> Rovner. <u>Suggested Reeds:</u> D'Addario, Mitchell Lurie, Rico Royal, Vandoren (6 <sup>th</sup> Gr.-2 ½ or 3, 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Gr.- 3 or 3 ½) |   |
| Oboe                       | Buffet, Fox, Selmer, Yamaha  | at least 3 reeds at all times, cleaning swab, ReedGard (for reed storage), pencil   |
|                            | <u>Suggested Reeds:</u> Handmade (available at TRMS – purchase through OSP Donations \$25 each)  |   |
| Bassoon                    | Fox, Schreiber, Selmer, Yamaha   | at least 3 reeds at all times, cleaning swab, ReedGard (for reed storage), pencil   |
|                            | <u>Suggested Reeds:</u> Handmade (available at TRMS – purchase through OSP Donations \$25 each)  |   |
| Saxophone                  | Bundy, Jupiter, Prelude, Selmer, Yamaha  | at least 5 reeds at all times, cork grease, cleaning swab, ReedGard (for reed storage), mouthpiece brush, pencil                            |
|                            | <u>Suggested Mouthpiece:</u> Selmer S-80 C*, Rousseau Classic R4 or New Classic NC4, Vandoren V5 A15; Clark Fobes 'Debut'. <u>Suggested Ligature:</u> Rovner ligature. <u>Suggested Reeds:</u> D'Addario, LaVoz, Rico Royal, Vandoren (2 ½ or 3)   |   |
| Trumpet                    | Bach, Holton, Jupiter, King, Yamaha<br><u>Suggested Mouthpiece:</u> Bach 5C or 3C  | Valve Oil, Slide Grease, Cleaning Kit, Straight Mute-Tom Crown or Dennis Wick, pencil   |
| Horn                       | <u>Suggested Mouthpiece:</u> Holton Farkas MDC   | Rotary Oil, Slide Grease, Cleaning Kit, pencil  |
| Trombone<br>Baritone       | Bach, Jupiter, King, Yamaha<br><u>Suggested Mouthpiece:</u> Bach or Blessing 6½ AL   | Cleaning Kit, "Super Slick" & water bottle, cotton handkerchief, pencil   |
| Tuba                       | <u>Suggested Mouthpiece:</u> Conn Helleberg 120s   | Valve Oil, Slide Grease, Cleaning Kit, pencil   |
| Percussion                 | Sticks/Mallets/Bag: provided through school instrument rental fee  | For Class: stick bag with sticks and mallets<br>For Home: "Real Feel" full head practice pad, wire music stand, tuner/metronome (see below) |

### METHOD BOOKS ARE PROVIDED WITH THE BAND FEE

\*In addition to the above list of accessories required for each individual instrument, **ALL students will need a wire music stand for at home practice, and a metronome/tuner.**

All students will need a tuner/metronome:

**Smart Phone Options:** Tonal Energy Tuner (TE Tuner): Apple (\$3.99)/Android (\$1.99) \*Highly recommended tuner/metronome combo\*, Metronome: Tempo Lite: Apple/Android (Free), Bandmate Chromatic Tuner: Apple/Android (Free)

**Tuner/Metronome Information:** Traditional tuners cost approximately thirty dollars (\$30.00): Boss TU 80, Korg TM-40, or Sabine MT9000. The Accent metronome/tuner is \$14.99.

**Phone Applications:** (optional) Fingering: Apple (\$5.99)/Android (N/A), Pitch: Apple(Free)/Android (N/A), InTune: Apple (\$0.99)/Android (N/A), NinGenius Music: Games 4 Kids: Apple (\$2.99)/Android (N/A)

## Private Lessons

Band students are strongly encouraged to study privately on their instrument. Research has indicated repeatedly that the study and *daily practice* of music has a dramatic impact on many areas of learning and growth, not to mention the intrinsic joy that it brings to one's life. Therefore, in addition to the band classes and performing ensembles that are a part of the Taylor Road Band experience, students are encouraged to seek out and study with one of the many professional musicians in our area. A list of private instructors will be made available to students and parents to help with the search for those who are interested. This is an excellent way to supplement the work done in class and get the most out of band.

## School-owned Instruments

The school maintains a small inventory of instruments which are available to students on an "as-needed, first-come, first-served" basis. A \$70 fee (\$35 per semester) is required for use of a school-owned instrument. Students wishing to check-out a school instrument must obtain and return the Fulton County Instrument Outfit check-out form signed by the parents before the instrument will be issued.

Students will be issued an instrument that has been cleaned and in proper playing condition. As per the signed Fulton County check-out form, the parents assume the "responsibility of any repairs incurred" during the rental agreement period. Additionally, parents assume the responsibility "of replacement of the instrument if it is lost or stolen." The instrument must be returned in the same condition in which it was issued (i.e. cleaned and in proper playing condition).

Students using school-owned instruments must take special care to ensure that the instrument is maintained properly and is not damaged due to negligence. Loss or theft of school-owned instruments must be reported to the band director immediately. Repeated negligence of a school-owned instrument by a student may result in loss of use of the instrument.

## Instrument Storage

Students will be assigned a storage space in which they may keep their instrument at school when not in use. This space is to be used for the student's instrument and folder **only** and should not be shared or changed without permission from the band director.

School instrument storage is a privilege, which will be taken away from students who abuse it.

## Classroom Procedures

Students should bring with them to their assigned seats their instrument, spare accessories, band folder, and pencil. Students should bring purses, schoolbooks, or other personal items with them to their seats and store them **under** their chairs during class.

The Taylor Road band room is a small space for many students. It is important that band students take care of this space and keep chairs, music stands, and other equipment in their designated spaces. Music stands are not to be used for any purpose other than holding music and should not be leaned-on or otherwise misused.

## Instrument Care & Maintenance

Students will be taught in class the proper methods of instrument care and maintenance and are expected to always follow these guidelines regardless of whether the instrument is school-owned or personally owned. Maintaining an instrument in proper working order is essential to success in band. Students should report any instrument defects to the director, who will advise the proper course of action for repair.

### Instrument Repair

The only **acceptable excuse** for a student not bringing his or her instrument to class is if the instrument is unplayable. In this case, **it is the responsibility of the student to communicate to the parent(s)** that the instrument needs to be repaired. Further, it is the responsibility of the parents to make reasonable effort to take the instrument to the shop for repair as soon as possible. The student is then responsible for completing – to the best of his or her ability – additional practice time outside of class to catch up for time missed.

Points will not be deducted from the student's Class Participation Grade provided that the student brings a letter in writing from the parents or a receipt from the repair shop indicating the date(s) the instrument was in the shop. Allowance will be made to accommodate time for parents to deliver and collect the instrument from the shop, since it is not always possible to do so immediately.

### Jazz Ensemble, Discovery Jazz and Little “Big” Band Rehearsals

Students who are selected for jazz band will be required to attend all rehearsals. The **Jazz Ensemble and Discovery Jazz** will rehearse on Friday mornings from 7:30 to 8:30 AM. The **Little “Big” Band** will rehearse on Monday mornings from 7:30 to 8:30 AM. Students with three unexcused absences will be removed from the band. All absences must be cleared with the directors **BEFORE** the absence occurs.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE ONLINE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM AT**  
**[TRMSBANDS.ORG](http://TRMSBANDS.ORG)**