

Raa Middle School Band Handbook



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Statement of Purpose and Policy

The purpose of this handbook is to provide valuable information to parents and students about the Augusta Raa Middle School Band Program. Members should familiarize themselves with this handbook and procedures. This handbook intends to make certain that all members and parents of our band are well informed. This handbook will address questions and concerns regarding the policies and procedures, calendars, etc. of our band. If a problem should arise, the director should be consulted for an explanation. All information in this handbook correlates with the Raa Middle School and Leon County School District Guidelines.

To assist band members and parents in understanding areas of responsibility, a statement of band policy is set forth. Becoming familiar with this policy will enable each individual to make the most of the opportunity to be a member of the Raa Middle School Band Program, enhancing skills as a student musician. **Members must develop a high sense of purpose toward the goals to which they are willing to work.** We intend to conduct ourselves in a manner that will facilitate all students in learning and bettering themselves.

Objective/Goals

1. To create a dynamic and immerse music experience for students at all playing levels.
2. To increase awareness of music as an art.
3. To give students the opportunity to learn a particular instrument and increase technical skills on that instrument.
4. To allow students opportunities to meet other students from their community who share a common interest in music.
5. To acquaint students with concepts of music theory, history, and literature and how these concepts relate to students' present lives and musical experiences.
6. To provide students with opportunities for self-expression and a healthy social experience.
7. To develop that ability to function as a responsible member of a group, enhance interaction, and develop unity and alliance among members.
8. To foster leadership skills within each student.
9. To provide societal skills in becoming productive, responsible, and successful members of society.

Course Description

Beginning Band

This year-round course offers new students an opportunity to learn to play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. This course is open for all grade levels - 6 through 8. The student and the teacher will collaborate to choose one instrument from the woodwind family (flute, oboe, clarinet), saxophone, brass family (French horn, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, tuba), or percussion (drum and mallets) for the student to study. Physical characteristics, prior musical experience, instrument availability, student interest, and the need for ensemble balanced instrumentation within the band will all be considered in instrument selection.

The goal of the beginning band is to provide students with the fundamental skills needed that will allow them to be able to explore and create in the musical world. Students are responsible for their musical development by creating practice habits that will ensure they have mastered a specific technique in class. This allows students to continue their growth in concert/symphonic bands in the future. Each student in the beginning band will be held to a high standard in their music education.

Concert Band (Blue Band)

Prerequisite: 1-year band experience, audition, and/or teacher approval.

This year-round course is a continuation of a beginning band, allowing students to build their musicianship and musical experiences through performance opportunities of intermediate-level wind and percussion literature (Grade 1-1.5). The concert band will continue to promote group effort and cooperation, creativity, discipline, and the enjoyment and appreciation of music.

Symphonic Band (Gold Band)

Prerequisite: 1-year band experience, audition, and/or teacher approval.

This year-round course is a continuation of a beginning and concert band, allowing students to build their musicianship and musical experiences through performance opportunities of advanced-level wind and percussion literature (Grade 2-2.5).

This advanced band course requires musicians to develop a mastery of rhythmic accuracy, awareness, and understanding of individual and ensemble playing. Students enrolled in this course are required to audition for the All-State and District Honors Band, Solo/Ensemble/Concert (spring semester), and participate in our community performance opportunities.

Band Course Materials

Pencil Instrument Instrument cleaning kits & polishing cloth Method music book (your instrument) 1-inch 3-ring Binder 50 Sheet Protector 23-24 Band fee: \$30 Band Shirt (information will be provided by director) Concert Attire: All Black		
<u>Beginning Band</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Method book: Habits of a successful Beginner Band Music (Green book) 	<u>Concert/Symphonic Band</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Method Book: Habits of a Successful Middle School Musician (Yellow book) Rubank advanced method, Volume 1 (except percussion) Percussion only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masterworks for mallets, trans. by Beth Gottlieb Intermediate Snare Drum Studies by Mitchell Peters 	
<u>Brass</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instrument and mouthpiece Valve oil - Trumpets Trombotine cream and spray bottle - Trombones Rotor oil - French horns 	<u>Woodwinds</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instrument and mouthpiece Vandoren Reeds (beginning - 2.5; Concert & Symphonic 3/3.5) Mouthpiece Patch & Cap Silk Swab Reed Protector (Flutes only need instrument and swab) 	<u>Percussion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percussion kit Mallet bag including xylophone, timpani (soft), and snare drumsticks. 6-inch Single-sided drum pad

Our local music store, Music Masters, will be at our instrumental rental night in the Raa band room on **Monday, August 14th, 2023**, from 4 - 6 PM. Beginning band students, I will be making recommendations for instruments and sending home a letter. Additional price information will be provided.

* Supplies can be purchase from our local music shops. Books can be purchase online (Amazon, Barnes and Nobles, etc.) or from Beethoven and Company, Inc. located in Tallahassee.

** Concert and Symphonic students that have been approved to switch instruments or did not rent an instrument from the previous year will need to attend the instrument rental night.

Expectations/Responsibilities

Being a member of the Raa Middle School Bands is a special privilege. Finding success in any performing arts requires many hours of diligent work, practice, repetition, failure, reevaluation, discussion with teachers and peers, rehearsal, and performance. Therefore, it is essential to demonstrate solid persistence toward musical excellence and dedication.

WE ARE A TEAM. Showing respect for people and property, kindness and cooperation, good and honest intentions, being punctual and prepared, showing a positive attitude, displaying integrity, intellectual curiosity, and trust are all critical attributes expected of band students. Make your voice heard in our program.

Core Values

The following four concepts form the core values for the students in the Raa Band Program:

Respect: Members are expected to demonstrate respect for all faculty, parents, other students, guests, property, and especially themselves. Common courtesy and politeness, friendliness, support of peers and competitors, helpfulness, and positive behaviors indicate respect. Conflicts should be handled maturely. Profanity, obscenity, and disrespectful speech or actions are not tolerated, whether in person or on social media.

Accountability: Accountability coincides among the same lines of “taking responsibility” and “understanding the actions you’ve done to others.” You have two responsibilities: to yourself (personal and musical growth) and any group you belong to. When a conflict arises, you are accountable for resolving it appropriately through adequate communication and promptly agreeing between all parties concerned.

Integrity: Integrity can be defined as being complete as a person or having great character and trustworthiness. A person with integrity demonstrates honesty, loyalty, and sincerity, showing consistency among principles, values, and behaviors.

Work Ethic: You need to seek out opportunities to help keep the day-to-day activities of the Raa Band program running smoothly. Possess great stewardship and help make our program successful. Be quick to distribute information, organize, set up chairs and stands, and do other tasks.

Classroom Expectations

- Students are expected to be responsible and respectful at all times.
- Students are expected to follow and implement beginning and ending classroom procedures and routines.
- Students are not to run or horseplay anywhere in the classroom or by music lockers.
- Students are expected to always have all of their materials for class daily.
- Students may not have any food or drinks, except water.
- Students are required to participate in class daily to receive full participation grades.
- Students are expected to arrive at class and rehearsals on time.
 - *Unexcused tardies to class and unexcused absences from class will result in consequences such as lunch detentions, no make-up work, an automatic zero for daily participation grade, or exclusion from other activities.*
- Many assignments are not paper based. Assignments will be posted on Canvas.
- Students must work hard inside and outside of class to be successful in this course.
- Cheating or pretending to be participating will not be tolerated whatsoever.

Behavioral Expectations

During the first week of school, the students will collaborate in creating class behavior expectations. Together we will decide how we will treat one another with a social contract agreement between the students and the teacher.

Classroom Consequences & Discipline

- **First Offense** – a verbal warning issued, consisting of a reminder of the rules, a restatement of the expectations, a reminder of consequences, and a polite request to stop the undesired behavior.
- **Second Offense** – seating may be changed, and student will be counseled following class as to what behavior modification need to take place. Event is recorded in behavior log and updated with each additional step. Daily participation points will be deducted from the grade.
 - Repetition of procedures (student gets a chance to redo their actions in the correct way)
 - Loss of privileges, including playing your instrument that day
- **Third Offense** – Parent contact (phone or email) will be made. Student also may be asked to pack up his or her instrument and given an alternative assignment.
 - Daily participation points will be deducted from their grade.
- **Fourth Offense** – Student/Parent Conference. Conference will include a Raa administrator and creating a solution that will prevent behavior from reoccurring.
- **Fifth Offense** – Office referral. Consequences may include lunch detention, ISS (in school suspension), or OSS (out-of-school suspension).

Serious Offense – as outlined in the Raa Middle School Student Code of Conduct, serious offenses warrant an immediate office referral with school consequences.

Rehearsal Etiquette

Early morning – the band room will be open every morning (8:45 AM, except Thursday) for students to come put their instrument up or practice. The band room is available for only active Raa band students. Students not practicing will be asked to leave the room.

- During the class transition, students will be lined up at the entrance door. The teacher will instruct students to come into the classroom and read the board for the rehearsal plan.
 - The “rehearsal plan” includes daily warm-ups, tuning, music theory lessons, literature, important announcements/dates, assignments, and other information.
- Students will come into the classroom and grab necessary supplies (instruments from their assigned locker, music stand, music binder, book, pencil, etc.).
- Students that need supplies – such as reeds, slide oil, etc. – will need to inform the teacher. Supplies will be on the teacher’s desk.
- Student’s backpack must be placed on the back or under their assigned seat.
- Our rehearsal plan, daily instructions, assignments, and important dates/announcements will be placed on the board.
 - The rehearsal plan includes warm-ups, tuning, music theory, and literature.
- Students are expected to remain in their seats during class time.
- Students must raise their hands to get permission to get out of their seats or ask questions.
- The “last 10 minutes” are designated for a short recap of the day’s lesson followed by dismissal. Students are to put supplies and equipment back. Music stands must be put back and lined up properly, instruments back in music lockers, and chairs are placed back in the correct area.
 - Students need to make sure they have all their supplies with them before leaving the classroom.
 - Students will line up at the exit. The teacher will dismiss students from class.

End of the day – Students are encouraged and expected to take instruments home to complete assignments and practice. Students are not to come into the classroom until the final bell at 3:50 PM. Students checking out of school early may come into the band room to get their instrument.

Chair Placement

Chair placement are standard practice in any musical ensemble and is what students can expect from their musical career. Every playing test and assignment throughout the academic year will count as a chair placement audition. This is intended appropriately place musician within the sections so that they are playing parts that are most accessible to them as well as challenging. This is also giving musicians with more experience an opportunity for leadership. The first chair (highest placed) student will be designated section leader and will fulfill the responsibilities expected of someone in that position. Students will have the opportunity to challenge for first chair at the beginning of every new Quarter.

**Beginning band chair placements will begin in the Spring semester.*

Bathroom Use

Bathroom policy (10 – 10 Rule/Signup sheet): Students are not allowed to the bathroom during the first and last 10 minutes of class. Students have 2 bathroom passes per week. Students will sign the bathroom form (locate on the teacher's desk) and take the pass to go to the bathroom. One student may leave at a time. Students are given 3 - 5 minutes to use the bathroom.

Illness and Injury

There are many circumstances that make it difficult to play an instrument, from strep throat and sinus infections to braces and broken bones. The student's health and welfare are always the director's first priority. However, relatively few illnesses or injuries prevent students from playing their instrument entirely, so long as they are using correct posture/embouchure and breathing techniques. Be advised that because Band is an academic class, you must produce a doctor's note forbidding the playing of instruments in order to be excused from playing your instrument in class, unless the injury is obvious (new braces/bronchitis, etc).

Grading System

Band classes create a group performance, yet each student is still held individually responsible for their individual part. It takes great dedication, individual practice, and collaborative efforts to have a high level of performance. The grades in band relate directly to state standards that measure how well a student is progressing towards the ability to have a high level of performance.

I. Class Participation - 30%

- Students are expected to demonstrate their preparedness for all rehearsals and concerts performing to the best of their ability daily.
- Students are expected to practice good rehearsal etiquette i.e.: looking over their part while another group is playing and participate fully in all class events.
- Students cannot participate if they do not have their supplies (instrument, music, pencil, etc.)

II. Homework - 10%

- Assignments will be posted using Canvas every Monday and must be turned in by Thursday at midnight.
- Homework assignments include practice checks, video submissions, and written assignment.
- Make-up work will only be given to students with excused absences.

III. Assessments (Written Test/Individual & Group Performances) - 60%

- Students will be graded on their progress in understanding new music concepts and playing.
- Feedback will also be provided on each quiz. Playing quizzes will be recorded.
- Group Performance - Students will be graded on the following areas for concerts: attendance, preparedness, concert attire and performance.

Individual Performance Assessments (IPA)

Each student is at an individual level with their musical ability and talent. As we continue to learn and grow through the school year, we will need to progress to meet the standards of our guaranteed and viable curriculum. These assignments will be specific skills, note patterns, tone, etc. that relates to music making for instrumentalists. These assignments give specific data to each student on how they can improve and what should be part of their daily practice towards their realization of these goals. Before every IPA, a rubric will be presented to students on how they will be graded. These assignments include:

1. Rhythmic Skills
2. Tone production
3. Musicality mastery
4. Scales, Arpeggios, and other patterns
5. Range development
6. Sight Reading
7. Technique

Performance/Events Calendar

The following are tentative dates for performance and events for the 2023-2024 school year. This document, as well as the website home page, will be updated as more information becomes available.

BB - Beginning Band, C/S - Concert/Symphonic Band

August 14, 2023	All	MusicMaster Instrument Rental Night (4-6 PM, Raa Bandroom)
September 9, 2023	C/S	All-State Audition, Lincoln High School
Sept. 18 - 29, 2023	All	1 st Band Fundraiser, World's Finest Chocolate Fundraiser
September 22, 2023	S	Etiquette Day Performances
October 19, 2023	C/S	Fall Arts Showcase
October 25, 2023	BB	Beginning Band 1 st Performance
October TBA	S	Community Performance
October 21, 2023	C/S	BBADB Marching Band MPA, Gene Cox Stadium
November TBA	All	2 nd Band Fundraiser - Gift Wrapping Band
November 4, 2023	C/S	BBABD Auditions
Nov. 14 th or 16 th	BB/C	Community Performance
November 28, 2023	All	November 28 th - Band Concert (Location: Godby H.S)
December TBA	All	Winter Festival - Celebration of Lights Parade (with Raa Dance Company)
January 10-13, 2024		FMEA Conference, Tampa, FL
January 18 th , 25 th -27 th	C/S	BBADB Rehearsals
February TBA	All	3 rd Band Fundraiser - Ozark Delight Lollipops
Feb. 7- 8, 2024	C/S	FSU Pre-MPA Performance
Feb. 16-17, 2024	C/S	District 3 Solo & Ensemble
Feb. 29 - March 2	C/S	District 3 Concert MPA (Leon H.S)
April 4 th or 6 th	All	Annual Raa Band Trip (Universal Studio Performance)
April 25, 2024	All	Spring Concert (Godby High School)

Band Fundraising

Every year, our band program will undertake an initiative that requires significant monetary support. During these initiatives, Mr. Bodiford may ask students to do fundraising for the group. Fundraising allows us to purchase new materials (including music for future performances, classroom supplies, electronic like tablets, new instruments, etc.) for use in teaching and may allow us to go on tour as a group. When fundraisers are active, our program is asking that families and students please consider participating. Every monetary amount we raise will benefit our future program. If you are not comfortable with participating however you would like to donate, that is great.

Instrument Rental

- It is expected that all students provide their own instrument, accessories, and material for participation in ensembles at Raa Middle School.
- If a family has an issue renting an instrument, it is recommended that you contact the director for a private conference regarding the matter.
- Raa Middle School Band Program provides large instruments, percussion equipment, and smaller instruments on a limited basis to students that need an instrument.
 - If you would like to rent a school-owned instrument, you will need to contact me directly to arrange a time to inspect the instrument and review and sign the instrument rental contract.
 - *It is asked that you submit a one-time \$30 donation to help cover the cost of repairs, maintenance, and materials.*
 - School instrument rental are subject to the completion of the rental contract.
 - Instrument must be returned at the end of the school year clean and in working condition.
 - Rental contracts are given/revoked at the discretion of the band director based on treatment of the instrument, its case, and/or band property.
- To facilitate obtaining an instrument, the following stores are available in the local area:
 - Music Masters, 1114 N. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL, 32303, P: 850.224.6158
 - Playground Music Center, 3360 Capital Cir. NE, Tallahassee, FL 32308, P: 850.320.6463

Buying a New Instrument

If a student is looking into buying a new instrument it is highly recommended that parents talk with the director or private instructor before making the purchase. There are more “knock-off” brands on the market than good quality brands. **Avoid eBay and Craigslist unless you know exactly what you are looking for.** A good place to check first is your local instrument repair shop; they will be truthful with you and may have instruments for sale. A good motto to abide by is: “If a deal is ‘too good to be true,’ then it probably is.” Please stick to traditional colors: black clarinets, brass saxophones, silver flutes, silver/brass trumpets, etc. Make sure that the instrument you are buying is music educator approved!

Private Lessons

Private instrumental lessons are an amazing opportunity for growth. They are highly encouraged at the middle school level to help propel students into a successful playing career through high school. It is never too early or too late to start taking lessons! There is a large network of very knowledgeable teachers in the area accepting new private students at this time. For specific recommendations on private instructors, please contact the director or call a local music store.