



GCES Band Handbook

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Hello! My name is Natalie Pretzello and I am the band director at Gorman Crossing Elementary School. After meeting with your child I know it will be an awesome year of music at GCES. Performing in instrumental music provides students with much more than musical ability. Students learn cooperation and teamwork, commitment and responsibility, tolerance and acceptance, and perseverance and self-discipline. Performing with a group that plays well helps build self-esteem, confidence and pride in accomplishment. Studying music also reinforces reading and math skills and enhances gross and fine motor skills. Most importantly, music is an integral part of human development and culture all over the world that your child is helping to preserve.

You can help reinforce what your child is learning in band class in several ways:

- Listen to music together
- Attend school and community concerts, including local middle and high school concerts
- Encourage your child to share with you some of the things they are learning in band class
- Find a quiet, well-lit space with a music stand in your home for your child to practice

Maintaining high expectations and standards gives each student the benefit of enjoyment from their musical experience. This handbook will explain those high expectations and the policies regarding your child's participation in the band program at GCES. Please read through the handbook with your child, sign and return the back of this page to me no later than **Friday, September 28**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at GCES. My email address is: Natalie_Pretzello@hcpss.org. You can also reach me by phone at (410) 880-5900. Don't forget to visit the band website at <http://GCESbands.weebly.com/>. There is helpful information and numerous student resources on the site.

Sincerely,

Natalie Pretzello

Gorman Crossing Elementary Band Commitment Statement

Music is a discipline that requires commitment. It is important for students and parents to understand that for Gorman Crossing Elementary School to have a successful and high quality band program, students participating must demonstrate a high level of commitment.

I ask that the student and parent/guardian demonstrate commitment to the band program by adhering to the following principles and signing below.

I acknowledge I have read and reviewed with my child the GCES Band Handbook (attached). I also acknowledge that breaking this commitment may result in the lowering of a grade or possible dismissal from the band program. Students are required to attend all rehearsals, concerts, and other performances. The only exceptions to this are serious illness, family emergency, or religious function. Please bring all conflicts with rehearsals or concerts to Mrs. Pretzello's attention well ahead of time.

In order to be a productive member of the Gorman Crossing Elementary School Band Program

I, (print student name) _____ agree to:

1. Attend all required rehearsals and concerts;
2. Arrive on time and prepared to do my best;
3. Take proper care of my instrument whether it is rented or owned;
4. Practice outside of school regularly;
5. Have a positive attitude and work hard in both class and home practice;
6. Take responsibility for making up any class work I might miss during my band classes;
7. Let my parents/guardians know of all rehearsals, concerts, and other important events;
and
8. Always try my best.

Please read and sign this contract. This form must be signed and the bottom portion returned by all students participating in band.

Cut here:

Student/Parent Contract

Please return to Mrs. Pretzello by **Friday, September 28, 2018.**

Student Name (print clearly): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Gorman Crossing Elementary School

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

COURSE Elementary Band, Grades 4 and 5
INSTRUCTOR **Natalie Pretzello**
410.880.5900
natalie_pretzello@hcpss.org

WEBSITE **<https://GCESbands.weebly.com>**

Course Description

The Gorman Crossing Elementary School Band Program provides a performance-based curriculum for advanced level learners, focusing on the development of expressive and artistic musical experiences through student driven work. It is important to note that we will not merely be playing instruments in this course, but rather learning the language of music *through* performance. As such, a significant portion of your work in this course will be devoted to refining your performance skills, increasing your ability to read new music at sight, and exploring what it means to be an all-encompassing musician. Students will have two 30-minute band classes a week. Students are responsible for bringing their materials to each band class and for practicing at least 15 minutes a day at home.

Materials

- Please see yellow supply list in your child's band folder

REQUIRED AFTER-SCHOOL PERFORMANCES:

Refer to HCPSS Policy 8090 Non School Hour Curricular Programs

Band students are expected to participate in all scheduled performances. Each member's presence is vital to the success of the group as a whole. Excused absences include severe illness, family emergency, and/or religious functions; Mrs. Pretzello must be notified as soon as possible. Unexcused absences include sporting events, practices, and vacations. Every effort has been made to avoid conflicting school events and middle school and high school events when scheduling concerts.

Advanced Band:

Winter Concert – Tuesday December 4, 2018, 7:00pm @ Gorman Crossing ES
Snow Date – Monday December 10, 2018, 7:00pm @ Gorman Crossing ES
Spring Concert – Tuesday April 9, 2019, 7:00pm @ Gorman Crossing ES

Beginning Band:

Winter Concert – Wednesday December 5, 2018, 7:00pm @ Gorman Crossing ES
Snow Date – Tuesday December 11, 2018, 7:00pm @ Gorman Crossing ES
Spring Concert – Wednesday April 10, 2019, 7:00pm @ Gorman Crossing ES

Students should arrive at GCES at 6:30pm for evening concerts.

Many students are currently enrolled in private lessons and thoroughly enjoy them. I highly recommend private lessons for all band members. A roster of private music instructors is available online at: <http://hcpsm3.wixsite.com/music/resources>

Instrumental music is a part of the curriculum in HCPSS. Report cards will be issued four times a year and distributed with the academic report card.

Grading

Grading categories from the HCPSS Music Grading Standards are weighted as follows:

| HCPSS Music Grading Standards | Grade Weight |
|---|---------------------|
| <i>Mus s1: Creativity & Composition</i> Develops and applies strategies to generate and express a variety of musical ideas. | 10% |
| <i>Mus s2: Musicianship</i> Uses best practices and experiences to inform and develop an authentic voice. | 10% |
| <i>Mus s3: Applied Skills & Technical Development</i> Demonstrates skills and strategies appropriate to music-making | 50% |
| <i>Mus s4: Procedures & Practices</i> Demonstrates appropriate musical practices in the classroom or rehearsal environment. | 20% |
| <i>Mus s5: Reflection</i> Communicates an understanding of concepts and strategies through the evaluation of music. | 10% |

Creativity and Composition - 10%

Students will complete composition assignments to further their understanding of music theory and creative processes.

Musicianship - 10%

Students will complete assignments that explore musical works performed in the class to further their understanding of performance practice. Assignments will include listening to personal, ensemble, and professional recordings and researching musical works to understand cultural and historical context.

Applied Skills & Technical Development - 50%

Every student will receive graded performance assessments and skills tests throughout the year. These tests may be video and/or audio recorded.

Procedures and Practices - 20%

Students are not just learning to perform on their instruments, but they are also learning to conduct themselves in a large ensemble rehearsal. This class will put the student in the role of a professional instrumental musician. As such, students will be asked to show their understanding of rehearsal and performance behavior. Students are observed and assessed on their instrumental performance and rehearsal conduct on a daily basis. This includes attending all classes with the required materials, utilizing instruments and materials correctly, following all school-based rules and procedures, trying one's best, and being a team player.

Reflection - 10%

Students will receive written reflection assignments over the course of the year. Students will evaluate their performances and performances by other groups in the following categories: tone, technique, intonation, musicality, balance, interpretation, musical effect, and other factors.