

GILES-LEIGH SCHOOL  
**DISTRICT 80**  
NORRIDGE, ILLINOIS  
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT  
BEGINNING BAND  
PARENT HANDBOOK

2011-12

[www.norridge80.org](http://www.norridge80.org)

cbucaro@norridge80.org



# BEGINNING BAND PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Band Parents:

Welcome back to another exciting year in the Giles-Leigh Schools. This year, as a member of the fifth grade, your son/daughter has the great opportunity of becoming a member of the Giles-Leigh Beginning Band! Instrumental music has always been a strong tradition within our schools and this is a great chance for your child to learn how to play a real musical instrument within an award-winning band program. As a participant in the band, your child will learn how to read musical notes and rhythms and the basics of playing a real musical instrument.

There are many benefits to band in addition to music as well. **Recent scientific research has proven that students who play a musical instrument gain increased reasoning skills and score higher on standardized tests in school.** Students also benefit from increased psychomotor skills including hand, eye, and finger coordination, as well as increased high order thinking skills. Your child will put all of these skills and knowledge together to perform music in a new, expressive and meaningful manner. And, of course, there are the many wonderful school concerts your child will perform in both for you and your family, and for his/her friends as well.

Band offers many rewards that will help your child become a happy and self-confident person. Not only will your child learn how to play an instrument, he/she will undoubtedly establish many new friendships, develop a strong sense of group dedication, and develop a commitment of working with other students toward a common goal. He/she will also become a widely recognized and respected member of our schools through our many public performances throughout the year. By playing a musical instrument, your child will develop a valuable sense of self-discipline and ultimately experience the joys of a new and creative musical world.

This handbook contains information you will find helpful during this first year in band. I am asking you to briefly go over the basics here with your child. Finally, please remember to come to the **Band Open House Night** which will be held in the Giles School Big Gym next **Tuesday, September 27th from 4:00-8:00 P.M.** Come in at any time during this block of time to sign up your child for this great opportunity, speak with me and the instrument company representative, and bring your instrument home! See you then!

Sincerely,  
Christopher Bucaro  
Band Director

## **Requirements for Band Membership**

The basic requirement for joining band is the overall desire of the student to learn to play a musical instrument. Your child will try out several instruments to determine which one best fits his/her interest, as well as his/her physical and musical characteristics. A small listening exercise will also be incorporated. This way, a proper choice can be made with the student's best interest in mind as well as the instrumentation needs of the band.

To begin this new musical adventure, your child must have an instrument of good quality along with the supplies listed later on in this handbook. Our schools use a very reputable music company to provide you with a quality rental plan and quality musical instrument. If you already have an instrument or wish to rent from another company of your choice, please feel free. I only ask that the instrument be in working order. I can discuss this with you at any time. As the weeks of band progress, your child will need to purchase extra reeds, valve oil, etc. These things are on sale for purchase throughout the year in the band room or you can order them from the music company.

### Home Practice

Your child's success in band depends largely on regular home practice. Practicing should be thought of as "performing at home" and must be regarded as a positive thing. A practice record will need to be turned in during your child's group lesson time and will be graded by the director. I am asking all parents to help your child fill in the practice minutes accurately and **sign each week completed**. Your child's weekly grade depends upon the quality and quantity of at-home practice.

Week of:	Assignment	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Total	Parent Signature
Oct 11-17	Page 2, # 2, 3, 4, 5	20	20	20			20	20	100/A	Mr. Doug
Oct 18-24	Page 2, # 6, 7, 8, 9									Mr. Doug
Oct 25-31	Rhythm #2, 3, 4									Mrs. Doug
Nov 1-7	Scale # 3 and 4									Mrs. Doug

Practicing diligently will bring about positive results for your child in band. A weekly time of 90 minutes or more is a suggested goal for a weekly grade of "A". All students need to put in this amount of time to make any progress at the beginning stages. Practicing should be spread out over the course of the week in an even fashion. A student who tries to "cram" in practice on one or two days will have difficulty learning the music assigned and producing a quality tone. I encourage you to ask your young musician to give "family concerts" as often as possible and bring the instrument to family events, etc.

Practice is so important for all beginners because it helps the student create full and supported tone, reinforces note comprehension, and enhances rhythmic skills. If your child plays regularly at home, he/she will eventually become a well-

rounded musician.

## **Attendance and Rehearsals**

As a member of the band, it is very important that your child attend all rehearsals, group lessons, and concerts. When making this commitment, your child becomes responsible for both him/herself and to the other band members as well. Each player is an integral part of the band and the band members must always rely upon each other in every playing situation. A weekly schedule will be posted in your child's classroom by each Monday for your son/daughter to check his/her band time for the week.

## **Group Lessons**

Each week, every band student will have a group lesson where he/she comes to the band room with other students playing like or similar instruments. This is where the students learn new material together. Your child will be attending 1 group lesson per week and will be excused from regular class for this. Your child's classroom teacher will receive this schedule and expect that your child will make up any missed work. All students need to attend each lesson with an instrument, **pencil**, music, and needed supplies. I will review all of these things with your child.

### **Leigh Lessons**

These will be held primarily on Tuesdays during the day. Your child will need to check the schedule weekly. **The first Leigh lesson day is Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Giles Lessons**

These will be held primarily on Fridays during the day, with some students possibly attending on Thursdays. Your child will check the schedule weekly. **The first Giles lesson day is Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>.**

## **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals refer to the times when the students play together in a full band setting together with their classmates. All different instruments are blended together here in a true "band" setting. The schedule for these is as follows:

### **Leigh Full Band Rehearsals**

Every Monday after school starting at 3:20 and ending at 4:15.

**The first Leigh 3:15 rehearsal is Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. There will NOT be rehearsal on Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>.**

### **Giles Full Band Rehearsals**

Every Thursday after school starting at 3:20 and ending at 4:15.

**The first Giles 3:15 rehearsal day is Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.**

## Grading

All band members are graded on lesson participation, rehearsal attendance, practice record, and progress. You will receive 1 progress report after the trial period is up (late January) indicating your child's progress and he/she will receive a grade for band on each report card starting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. There are two concerts this year, one in February and one in May.

## Care and Repair of Instruments

Since your child will be playing an authentic instrument, he/she will learn proper instrument care in class. All cases should be latched securely when carried or transported to and from school. Each instrument should be properly cleaned after each use. **The identification tag should be filled out immediately including your name, address, phone #, etc.** Should your child's instrument need repair at any time, please have it brought into me as soon as possible. Our music company representative will pick the instrument up on his weekly visit and have the instrument serviced. Repairs usually take one week, and a loaner instrument will be provided for your child to use during this time so no band time or progress will be lost. There is no cost for the loaner.

## Parent Involvement and Responsibility

There is nothing that will influence your child's success, continued improvement, or general positive attitude more than your sincere encouragement and interest in his/her band participation. These are some suggestions on how you can help influence your child's progress:

1. Set aside a regular time and quiet place for practicing each day at home.  
Make sure there are no **distractions** such as a nearby television, radio, or I-pod, playing nearby!
2. Please help your child fill out the practice sheet and sign it. He/she will be graded on it during the weekly lesson at school.
3. **Listen** to your child play at home. Be generous with praise and positive compliments for your child's achievements at home.
4. Make sure the student comes prepared on band days.
5. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.
6. Attend both concerts your child will perform in.
7. Help your child understand that hard work now will pay off with musical fun and enjoyment in the near future. Make band a commitment.

## Beginning Band Needed Supplies List

Depending upon which instrument your child has selected, the following materials need to be purchased when you send the rental forms in for the

instrument. These are **one-time purchases** and will be used extensively throughout the first year in the band. **Please note these are in addition to the rental fees:**

Flute

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice  
Handkerchief for swabbing  
(man's white handkerchief is good)

French Horn

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for practice

Clarinet/Oboe

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice  
Clarinet: 1 box of Rico 2 1/2 reeds/  
Swab combo

Tuba

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice  
Tuba players will use a school-owned instrument for an annual fee.

Alto/Tenor Saxophone

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice  
Alto saxophone box of Rico 2 1/2 reeds/  
Swab combo

Trombone

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice

Trumpet

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice

Percussion

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice

Euphonium(Baritone)

Standard of Excellence Method Book 1  
Folding music stand for home practice

Prices:

Standard of Excellence Book: \$9.95 for woodwinds and brass  
\$10.45 for Percussion/French Horn/Oboe  
Folding music stand: \$15.90  
Combo box of clarinet reeds, reed guard, and swab: \$19.00  
Combo box of alto saxophone reeds, reed guard, and swab: \$23.55

Combo box of tenor saxophone reeds, reed guard, and swab: \$30.00  
Oboe extra reed pack, reed guard, reed soaker cup: \$38.45

**Junior High Performance Opportunities for Giles-Leigh Band Members**

There are many performances throughout the year that feature our junior high band members in.

### **Cadet Band (Intermediate Band)**

This band is made up mostly of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and performs in the Fall Concert, Holiday Concert, and Spring Concert. This is the preparatory band for the Concert Band.

### **Concert Band**

The Concert Band is made up of the most highly skilled musicians in the school who have passed an audition. Membership includes mostly 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This band has a major emphasis on performance and performs in the annual Fall Concert, Halloween Parade, Holiday Christmas Concert, Ridgewood High School Musicfest, Illinois Grade School Music Association (IGSMA) District 7 Contest, Spring Musicales, Spring Concert, and Graduation. The students also perform in a solo/ensemble contest where they are rated and can earn medals.

### **Jazz Band**

This is a smaller group of players who learn to play the various jazz styles of swing, blues, rock, Latin, funk, etc. Jazz Band membership is open to Concert Band members who play the appropriate jazz instruments.

### **Beginning Band important dates for 2011-12**

- Thursday, September 22, 2011...Tonight's Orientation Meeting!!
- Tuesday, September 27, 2011  
Beginning Band instrument and supplies pick-up  
4:00-8:00 P.M. – Giles School Big Gym... Come at your convenience!!
- Wednesday, February 8, 2012  
Beginning Band rehearsal for Winter Concert...3:15-5:30 PM at Leigh School  
**Bus transportation will be provided for the Giles band members.**
- Thursday, February 9, 2012  
Beginning Band Winter Concert (Their first concert!) at Leigh School at 7:00 PM  
Students need to arrive by 6:15 PM!
- Tuesday, May 8, 2012  
Beginning Band rehearsal for Spring Concert...3:15-5:30 PM at Giles School  
**Bus transportation will be provided for the Leigh band members.**
- Wednesday, May 9, 2012  
Beginning Band Spring Concert at Giles School at 7:00 PM  
Students need to arrive by 6:15 PM.