

2022-2023 School Year



Matthew Spindler

Director of Bands

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Riversprings Middle School Band program is to offer students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades an opportunity to learn about instrumental music in a positive, fun environment. It is our desire to give each and every student the experience of producing music and expressing creativity through music. We believe that every child has the right to develop a lifelong love of music. Our band program exists to help facilitate that development and to prepare them to meet the high school entrance level as stated through the Sunshine State Standards and the local high school.

AVAILABLE ENSEMBLES

Beginning Band: All first year players will be placed in the beginning band class.

Concert Band: This class serves as the intermediate ensemble for the band program. It is designed primarily for 2nd year players and a few 3rd year players.

Symphonic Band: This is the top performing ensemble in the RMS Band Program designed primarily for 3rd year players, though some 2nd year players will be asked to promote early.

Jazz Band: This ensemble is a class containing 7th and 8th grade students. Students must be currently enrolled in either symphonic or concert band to be eligible for this ensemble. Only exceptions will be piano, bass, and guitar players.

Note: Mr. Spindler makes sure each student is placed in the ensemble that best fits their level of ability. Factors involved in ensemble placement include, but are not limited to; grades, instrumental tone quality, instrumental technical ability, school attendance, work ethic, attitude, ensemble balance, and willingness to receive instruction. Mr. Spindler has the final say on all ensemble placements and chair placements throughout the band program.

BAND FUNCTIONS

Students in the band program are definitely busy! We perform at numerous functions throughout the year, some of which the dates are not known until after the start of school. Below is a list of approximate dates for known performances and which ensembles are expected to be present:

*Football games: Games will be held in the months of September and October. Symphonic band members are required to participate. It is optional for concert band members.

*Annual Concerts: The band holds two annual concerts, one in mid-November and one in early May. All band students must be present for these dates.

*Concert MPA: This is the annual assessment for the band program wherein we receive our rating for the year (e.g. Superior, Excellent, etc.). The event occurs in early March each year, and Symphonic Band is required to attend. Depending on the size and sound of the ensemble each year, the Concert band may also be asked to perform.

Please read the attendance and grading policies below in regards to performance Attendance.

GRADING POLICY

Nine week grades will be determined from the following:

Daily Participation and Preparation	15%
Practice Records (7).....	15%
Assessments.....	30%
Performances.....	40%

Practice Records (15%)

Practice records are what we use to track how often the students practice and prepare for their class. This is the equivalent to homework for other classes. Students must practice a minimum of 90 minutes a week. A student can split this up into small chunks if desired. The form must be signed by a parent or guardian. Students must turn it into the practice records basket on Fridays. They must do 7 practice records each 9 weeks, but can only turn one in a week.

Daily Participation Grade (15%)

The daily participation grade consists of musical preparation, and bringing all required materials to class. Required materials are an instrument (including mouthpiece and reeds), folder of all assigned music, method book, pencil, and a positive attitude. If a student is late to class or missing materials (excluding instrument), one warning will be given per week. If the same infraction occurs within the same week after a warning has been given an F for a grade. Forgetting an instrument (that is, not being able to play for lack of equipment), is an automatic F grade. Students' attendance in after school rehearsals go into their daily participation.

Assessments (30%)

Assignments may be in the form of a worksheet or performing a part of their music, scales, etc. Assignments will mostly be done in class but if students miss class they will need to complete the assignment as homework. If the student misses a performing assignment they will be asked to send Mr.Spindler a video via email. Students who do poorly on an assignment may redo the assignment as homework but must be turned in via email before the end of the 9 weeks it was assigned.

Performances (40%)

This includes concerts, parades, festivals, FBA, MPA and any other musical events in which the full band is performing. Please see the section below on absences for information on what constitutes an excused absence.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Calendars are provided at the beginning of the school year. Any changes to the calendar will be made as far in advance as possible. Unless otherwise stated, all performances are mandatory. The students put a lot of time and effort into preparing for performance and should not have to worry about their peers letting them down by not showing up.

Students who are involved with other extracurricular activities at RMS will be asked to work with Mr. Spindler and other coaches/sponsors to set up a plan for how time will be shared with all activities. Students will not be penalized for participating in numerous activities, however we do ask for open communication with all activities so that the best possible schedule can be arranged for all involved.

Mr. Spindler must be notified 1 week in advance should there be a scheduling conflict. Students will NOT be excused from any concert or FBA event...so please plan ahead for your child. In case of an emergency please leave a message for Mr.Spindler at the school (926-2300 x6801) or email at Matthew.Spindler@wcsb.us as soon as possible and follow up with a written note. Emergencies will be considered for excusal on an individual basis and must be presented in writing. Unexcused absences from performances will negatively influence a student's grade, may result in a student not being allowed to attend band field trips, and possibly the promotional status to the Symphonic Band.

After School Rehearsal

Attendance at ALL after school rehearsals is mandatory. Students who skip rehearsal are likely to be excluded from playing at assessments, concerts, and may be excluded from band field trips. Failing to perform at a concert or assessment will lower student grade (see section 2 and 3). Excused absences may be given on a case by case basis, but Mr. Spindler must be notified at least one week in advance. Please note that "not having a ride" will not be excused as many students make necessary arrangements in this situation.

Band is a year long course. A student who enrolls in band will remain in band for the entire school year. If a student decides not to be in band the following school year, the student will be scheduled into the Unified Arts rotation wheel. Please contact Mr. Spindler with any questions or problems you encounter with regard to the band program.

CONDUCT

All students in the RMS band program are expected to follow the official Student Code of Conduct of Riversprings Middle School and the Wakulla County School Board at all times. Major or consistent infractions of this policy could be cause from removal from the program. In addition, the following conduct standards have been designed to create a positive learning environment. They are expected of all RMS band members:

- There will be no talking or disruptive noises while the director is on the podium.
- There will be no food, drink, candy, or gum allowed in the band room.
- Students may not touch instruments or equipment that does not belong to them without permission from the owner AND the band director...zero tolerance violation.
- Theft will not be tolerated and is a zero tolerance violation.
- Only percussionists may touch the percussion equipment.
- Students will strive to maintain positive words and attitudes while participating in band activities and classes.
- No use of profanity or otherwise inappropriate speech.
- No student may say anything negative, insulting, or demeaning to others.
- No spraying of perfumes, body sprays, hairspray... allowed in or around the band room.

Non-adherence to these standards could result in one of the following disciplinary actions: lunch detention, written assignment, office referral, loss of privileges (including field trip attendance), and/or removal from the band program.

Grades, Eligibility and Contribution

As part of any ensemble in the RMS Band Program, students will be expected to maintain high grades in all of their band classes. The minimum required band GPA to perform at MPA, or to travel to any field trip is a 2.0 (or a C average). Students will not be allowed to travel with the band in any capacity (including the graded MPA event in March) if they do not maintain this average across all calculated 9 weeks' grades. While band is not an "academic course", it is graded just as strictly and requires similar focus and long range attention to detail as any academic course at the school. Please do not ask Mr. Spindler to grade multiple weeks' worth of work so that a student may gain last minute eligibility. Rather, check FOCUS frequently and ask any questions that you may have upon seeing a low grade. Students can make up grades for almost anything in their gradebook, but not all at one time! Planning is crucial for success in this class.

Additionally, it is expected that all students involved in the band program will be "contributing members" of the ensemble. This is defined as "consistently contributing through instrumental performance and through personal investment in the band program." Students who do not add to the experience of others both with their playing (e.g. playing their instrument each day in class) and their presence (i.e. students must not be rude or distracting so as to detract from another student's experience) may be asked to change ensembles or possibly be dismissed from the program. A parent conference/meeting will be scheduled before any such action is taken, and every opportunity will be given for students to improve once an issue has been detected. Please understand that the actions (or inactivity) of one student has an effect on all of the others present in their band.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES / UNIFORMS

During concerts / performances, all band members will be required to wear the assigned uniform. Mr. Spindler will be contacting all parents/guardians of the apparel to be worn. Students must wear black dress shirt, black closed toe shoes (dress shoes) and black socks or stockings/hose. All families will have adequate time to obtain the necessary items well prior to the day of the concert. Students out of uniform will not be allowed to perform and will be given an unexcused absence for the performance (See Attendance Policy).

All RMS band students are required to provide / purchase the following items:

- \$ 25.00 Activity Fee
- Black Dress Shirt
- Instrument (discussed in next section) and required cleaning/maintenance supplies (e.g. valve oil, reeds, cork grease, etc.).

- Blue jeans
- Black dress pants
- Black dress shoes
- Long black socks

To our Students and Families with Financial Difficulties:

Every effort will be made by the director and the school to ensure that every student with a desire to learn can participate in the band program regardless of financial capabilities. This is only possible if we are made aware of any difficulties. Students must be up to date on all payments to participate in any field trip or special event.

INSTRUMENTS / EQUIPMENT

Most students will be required to rent or purchase their own instruments by the start of the third week of school. You will be provided with this information and the opportunity to do so during the first few weeks of school. There are a limited number of school-owned instruments. Students who are issued a school instrument will sign an instrument rental contract and pay a rental fee of \$45 for the year to cover general maintenance of the instrument. Students will be responsible for any damages beyond normal wear and tear. If the instrument rental fee is to be paid in installments, the first \$20 will be due at the end of August and the second payment of \$25 will be due at the beginning of the second 9 week grading period.

FUNDRAISING

Throughout the year, the band will need to have fundraisers for the purpose of purchasing new sheet music, books, instruments, equipment, and FBA (Florida Bandmasters Assoc) participation events. Students in the band will be expected to participate in these fundraisers to the best of their ability. Students will not be penalized for non-participation in fundraising events but those who do participate will often be eligible for funds placed in their individual band account to pay for any band related expenses. Students may also be able to earn credit through fundraisers that can be used to help pay for band field trips. Money in the band account can only be used while in the RMS band program. If/When the student leaves the program, the money cannot be transferred to another school or cashed out in any way.

TRAVEL

Occasionally it will be necessary for the band to travel to performance sites, festivals, field trips, etc. The Wakulla County School Board field trip policy requires students to travel to field trip locations on school provided transportation. Students are permitted to travel home from an event with a custodial parent as long as Mr. Spindler has received a written notice signed by the principal/assistant principal stating that the transportation arrangements have been approved. In the days leading up to a field trip, students may bring these notes to Mr. Spindler and he will take them to the administration for approval or the student/parent may get the note signed on their own and then turn it in to Mr. Spindler. These notes need to be received by Mr. Spindler at least 48 hours prior to the start of travel.

When traveling with the band, students should remember that they are representing Riversprings Middle School and the entire RMS Band Program. All band rules and school rules and dress code will be in effect. Always behave in a manner which you would be proud for others to observe. Unacceptable behavior will be dealt with harshly.

In addition to the rules set forth by the school and the band handbook (see "CONDUCT") each trip will have specific rules and guidelines. These rules and a complete itinerary will be distributed by the director prior to travel.

AWARDS

The following awards / certificates will be presented each year:

- Most outstanding Rookie: given to an outstanding 6th grade student.
- Most improved: given to the 7th grade student showing marked musical improvement.
- Leadership Award: given to the 8th grader who demonstrated exceptional leadership in band.
- Musicianship Award: given to students who show the highest quality of musical skill.
- Director's Choice Award: given to committed 8th grade students visible in all aspects of the band program.
- Medal of Honor: given to 8th grader as the student of the year in the band program
- Students who participate in Solo and Ensemble that score Superior from FBA
- Band students involved with FMEA All-State Band or Honor Band

Each award will be awarded upon the decision of the director. In some cases, more than one student may receive the same award. However, for honor awards (leadership, outstanding rookie, medal of honor) typically one student will receive the award.

Riversprings Middle School Band

2022-2023

Matthew Spindler
Director of Bands
Matthew.Spindler@Wcsb.org

The band handbook outlines the policies and procedures of the band program. These policies are essential to the effective running of a program of this size. All students and parents of students must agree to follow what is stated in the handbook for the student to be a member of this ensemble. If you have any questions please contact Mr.Spindler

By signing I am stating that I have read the handbook and that The student and the parent agree to the policies and procedures of the Riversprings Middle School Band Program. I also agree that my student will be at all after school rehearsals and events unless discussed with Mr.Spindler beforehand. Please put the phone number and email you would like to be contacted with about RMS Band information.

Students Name (Print): _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name Print: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Email: _____

Parent Phone Number: _____

Student T-Shirt Size: YS YM YL S M L XL XXL

Any other shirts (\$10 each): _____

Wakulla County Schools

COMMITTED TO SUCCESS

NON DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The School Board of Wakulla County, Florida does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information for applicants and employees, or any other reason prohibited by Federal and State law regarding non-discrimination. See 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d); 34 C.F.R. 106.9; 34 C.F.R. 110.25.

In addition, the School Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. See 34 C.F.R. 108.9.

Disabled individuals needing reasonable accommodations to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services, programs, and activities of the School Board are required in advance to notify the administrator at the school/center at which the event or service is offered to request reasonable accommodation. The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to any opportunity or event associated with Wakulla County Schools.

The designated Equity Coordinator, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Coordinator as required by 34 C.F.R. 100.6(d) is Lori Sandgren, Executive Director of Human Resources, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327; (850)926-0065; lori.sandgren@wcsb.us.