

# **B.L. Gray Rattler Band**

**Handbook 2017-2018**



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# **SHARYLAND BAND DEPARTMENT**

## **B.L. GRAY JUNIOR HIGH BAND HANDBOOK**

### **Mission Statement:**

The Sharyland Band program is designed to promote and encourage students with a desire to learn and enjoy music. This is done through a quality instructional and extracurricular experience. The “Band Experience” enriches students’ lives in many ways, often for years to come after high school graduation. Their self-discipline, social and communication skills, self-concepts, cooperative talents and creative mind will all be nurtured through their study of music.

We know that band students are the ones who enjoy successful high school careers, go on to colleges and universities, and become leaders in our society. Statistics prove that learning a musical instrument makes a positive impact on grade point average (GPA), SAT and ACT scores. For many students, band provides the necessary scholarships for college study, including fields outside of music.

The Sharyland bands are known for their excellence in music. This requires cooperation from all involved: students, parents, directors, and administration. This handbook explains the policies, guidelines, and expectations of the B. L. Gray JH Band. If your student is to be successful, we expect that you and he/she will comply with the guidelines presented in this handbook.

Every student is important to the success of the band’s performance and appearance. Dedication and responsibility will make a band for which we can be proud.

We are looking forward to a great year. Please contact the band department if you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year.

**Please keep this handbook in your band binder for easy reference.**

## **GENERAL RULES**

ALL STUDENTS will be expected to follow all school district policies as outlined in the Sharyland ISD Parent – Student Handbook. The following rules and consequences are not just limited to the classroom but will apply to all band activities as well.

1. Each student is to respect and care for all school-owned equipment and facilities as they would their own. Any carelessness, neglect, or abuse of school equipment or mischievous vandalism in the band hall will not be tolerated. If this kind of behavior occurs, the result will be a parent/teacher conference and/or report to the assistant principal's office. Defacing or destroying school property or any items associated with the band program will result in payment for damages and possible expulsion from band.
2. No food, drink, or gum will be allowed in the band hall.
3. Only band students shall be allowed in the band hall. This is for the protection of both school and personal property.
4. Public display of affection is not acceptable at any time.
5. Foul or disrespectful language is not acceptable.
6. Students will have their names on the outside of their instrument cases. Percussionists must label all of their equipment, including sticks and mallets.
7. Do not play your instrument without permission.
8. Do not touch any instrument except your own.
9. Do not disturb anyone who is teaching. Do not disrupt class rehearsals, sectional rehearsals or private lessons in progress unless absolutely necessary.

## **BAND CLASS RULES**

1. Bring all materials to class. This includes: instrument, binder with all music, and pencil. Woodwind players should also have 4 extra reeds. Brass players should have valve oil and mutes. Percussionists should have all sticks and mallets.
2. Be in your seat and ready to work when the director starts the warm-up. Failure to be in your seat when class begins will result in an unexcused tardy.
3. Respect and be polite to all people.
4. Do not talk or leave your seat during the class period.
5. Respect other people's property.

## CONSEQUENCES

Consequences may vary based on the severity of and number of offenses.

1. Verbal Warning
2. Isolation and Parent Conference
3. Detention or referral issued
4. Conference with Parents and Assistant Principal
5. Extreme offenses can result in expulsion from the band program.

## CONCERT DRESS

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO DRESS APPROPRIATELY FOR ALL PERFORMANCES. There are no exceptions to these uniform requirements. Students attending in improper attire may not be allowed to participate in the performance. This will result in grade penalties. The following is the acceptable attire for performances.

Boys: **Black** shirt with collar, **black** dress slacks, **black** dress shoes, and **black** long socks

Girls: **Black** shirt with collar or **black** blouse, **black** skirt or **black** slacks, **black** hose or socks, **black** dress shoes. (Skirts must be below the knee, and pants must be full length, no Capri pants, and no leggings.) No bare legs.

**MUST COMPLY WITH SHARYLAND ISD DRESS CODE!**  
**NO JEANS, TENNIS SHOES, OR T-SHIRTS!**

If the student cannot afford the required concert attire, they should discuss the matter with a band director well in advance of the first performance.

## BAND SHIRTS

All junior high band students are required to purchase a band shirt. This is the official uniform for football games, pep rallies, and off-campus trips. When the shirt is the uniform, it should be tucked in and the sleeves should not be rolled up. When the band shirt is the assigned uniform, students not wearing the band shirt may not be allowed to perform. This will result in grade penalties. Information regarding the purchase of band shirts will be available during band camp. If the student cannot afford the band shirt, please speak with a band director well in advance of the first performance. Parents, relatives and other band supporters are also welcome to purchase a band shirt.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

1. Students need to attend and be on time for all rehearsals, sectional rehearsals, and pre-performance warm-ups throughout the school year. **ALL CONCERTS AND PERFORMANCES ARE MANDATORY.**
2. “Perfect practice makes perfect!” Every band student should be practicing 30-40 minutes per day on his/her instrument. The band will only progress as each student becomes a better player.
3. Each student must have all necessary equipment at every rehearsal, sectional rehearsal and performance. Missing supplies will negatively affect the student’s daily grade. (See “Band Grading System”).
4. Since band members are some of the best students, it is to be expected that they will be involved in many activities. It is inevitable that some conflicts will arise. A schedule conflict **DOES NOT** excuse missing a sectional, rehearsal, or especially a performance. The band staff must be notified of any schedule conflicts at least 5 days prior to the event. We will be flexible, but we must insist that obligations to the band are met.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS**

1. Every parent should help their band member find practice time at home. If the parent is not hearing an instrument played at home, the chances are not very good that the student is learning assignments.
2. Please do not prohibit your son or daughter’s participation in band activities. This detracts from the band’s progress. Every student is essential for our success, so they need to be present for rehearsals, sectionals, and performances.

The band directors do like to hear from parents. Feel free to communicate with the band staff! We do not have all the answers, but most times we can help. You can reach us by telephone, 580-5333 ext. 1798, or on the B.L. Gray Jr. High Band website at <http://www.sharylandisd.org> Pull down tab for schools, go to B.L. Gray JH, under extracurricular click on band.

## **LOCKERS AND INSTRUMENT STORAGE**

All students will be assigned a locker and issued a combination lock during the first week of school. Instruments and music should be stored in the appropriate locker at all times. The school – issued combination lock is the only lock that may be used. Non-school locks may be cut off at any time. Only band related materials should be stored in the band locker. Please do

not use these lockers for other school books, food, trash, etc. Cases must be closed properly when in the locker, and the lock needs to be locked. The combination lock shall be the student's responsibility for the entire year. The cost to replace a lost lock is \$20.00.

## **SECTIONAL REHEARSALS**

1. The junior high bands will have sectional rehearsals before or after school. These rehearsals will be announced at least one week in advance.
2. Participation at sectional rehearsals will be part of the band grade for the six weeks grading period. Students involved in athletics before or after school, will need to make arrangements with the coaching staff and band staff. Our goal is to provide individual attention and both staffs are very accommodating to individuals.
3. An excused absence not related to school absence must be approved by a band director in advance.

### **Cell Phone Usage: During Sectional And Extension of the Classroom Day Rehearsals**

Communication has changed in the last few years. More and more is done through cell phone usage either talking or texting. The band staff will be enforcing the school district rules for cell phone usage during organized instruction before and after school. The staff believes this will give the students a better and higher quality level of instruction.

## **SPRING INCENTIVE TRIP / FUND RAISER**

The band department will organize an incentive trip which will be funded by student fund raising. The remaining cost will be met by the student. **THIS TRIP IS NOT MANDATORY.** Additional information about this trip will be sent home via our website and informational letters sent home.

## **COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY BAND CAMPS**

Several universities offer summer band camps. These are one or two week camps where students receive intensive instrumental training. They are wonderful developmental experiences for the students. Information on camps will be available in the spring for interested students. In addition, students may apply for partial band camp scholarships if they are interested. The number and amount of scholarships issued will be determined by available funds.

# SUPPLIES

1. ALL JUNIOR HIGH BAND STUDENTS WILL BE ASSIGNED A BINDER. THIS MUST BE BROUGHT TO ALL REHEARSALS AND SHOULD ONLY CONTAIN BAND HANDOUTS, INCLUDING MUSIC, SCALE SHEETS, WARM-UPS, THE HANDBOOK, AND ANY OTHER MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED BY THE BAND DIRECTORS.
2. A PENCIL MUST BE IN THE BINDER. PENS ARE NOT ALLOWED.
3. ALL INSTRUMENT CASES MUST BE CLEARLY LABELED ON THE OUTSIDE WITH THE STUDENTS NAME AND BAND CLASS.
4. Students will be required to purchase the *Foundations for Superior Performance* method book for their specific instrument. This book will be used in all bands as the textbook.
5. Metronomes and tuners are invaluable practice tools. These can be purchased at any music store, or downloaded on their mobile devices. They are not required, but are highly recommended.
6. The supplies listed below are specific to each individual instrument, and are available at any music store. Inspections for these items will be held periodically, and counted as a grade.

**Flutes:** marching lyre, cleaning rod and rag, flip folder, and pencil. Inspections will include polishing and checking to make certain all pads are in good condition and closing completely.

**Oboes:** marching lyre, cleaning swab, flip folder, and pencil, two working reeds.

**Bassoons:** marching lyre, cleaning swab, flip folder, and pencil, two working reeds.

**Clarinets:** marching lyre, flip folder, 4 Vandoren V-12 reeds (reeds must be unbroken – NO Rico or Grand Concert reeds), reed holder, cleaning swab, mouthpiece cap and ligature, mouthpiece brush, cork grease, and pencil. Inspections will include checking to make certain all pads and corks are in good condition and all pads are closing completely.

**Saxophones:** marching lyre, flip folder, 4 Vandoren reeds, reed holder, cleaning swab, mouthpiece cap and ligature, mouthpiece brush, cork grease, and pencil. Inspections will include polishing, checking to make certain all pads are in good condition and are closing completely, and checking to make certain neck cork is in good condition.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The directors will not permit a student to play on a cracked or broken reed. The reed has everything to do with the quality of sound that the instrument produces. Even a “good” player will sound “bad” on a cracked or chipped reed. Reeds need to be taken off the mouthpiece at the end of each playing session and placed in a reed holder to keep it working properly. Students without reeds are unprepared for class. Please help your band student maintain an adequate supply of reeds throughout the entire year.

**Trumpets, Horns, Baritones, Tubas:** marching lyre, flip folder, mouthpiece brush, valve oil, tuning slide grease, cleaning rod and rag, polishing cloth and pencil. Inspections will include polishing and checking valves and all slides for free movement.

**Trombones:** marching lyre THAT CLIPS TO THE BELL, flip folder, mouthpiece brush, slide lubricant and spray water bottle, polishing cloth, tuning slide grease, and pencil. Trigger horn players will also need valve oil. Inspections will include polishing, checking the slide and tuning slide(s) for easy free movement. Trigger trombones will also have triggers checked for easy movement.

**Percussion:** flip folder, stick bag, snare drum sticks, timpani mallets, a pair of marimba and xylophone mallets, and a pencil. Please clearly label all of your supplies.

## **SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS**

1. Sharyland ISD owns many of the more expensive band instruments and makes them available to the students. These include tubas, sousaphones, baritones, french horns, baritone and tenor saxophones, bass clarinets, etc. Any intentional misuse or damage to a school owned instrument, while it is checked out to a student, must be paid for by that student.
2. Our inventory of instruments is repaired each summer for normal wear and tear. Any student already enrolled in the Sharyland band program may check out his/her instrument for the summer. All students should take instruments home for the summer and find some practice time!
3. The condition of the instrument at check out is carefully documented. If any repair is needed due to damage caused by the student, the student will be required to pay for the repair bill.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

1. Private lessons are the quickest way to progress on a musical instrument. If the student would like to study with a private teacher, speak with a band director for a teacher recommendation.
2. If a student requires or requests additional help, the Sharyland band staff will find the time before or after school, or after sectionals.

## **ALL-REGION COMPETITION**

1. The Texas Music Educators Association sponsors a series of competitions for band students which are held in December of each year. The music which will be used in All-Region competition will be available from the band staff.
2. Participation in these contests is strongly encouraged! Students who prepare these musical selections progress more quickly in musical and technical abilities than students who do not participate.

## **SMARTMUSIC**

SmartMusic is award-winning interactive music software that provides the ideal practice environment. With a subscription to SmartMusic, students have unlimited access to the world's largest accompaniment library for all ages and skill levels, which includes thousands of pieces of music.

Launch SmartMusic. Plug in the microphone, and start practicing. SmartMusic is ideal for woodwind, brass, percussion, string, and vocal musicians of all levels. Students play or sing their part with background accompaniment and get instant feedback on their computer.

B.L. Gray Junior High Band has four laptops that are available for student use with SmartMusic installed. The students may use the laptops before and after school, and during the student's lunch periods. Because of our large band enrollment and limited number of laptops, we encourage all parents and students to purchase a student subscription of SmartMusic for their home computer or laptop. The yearly subscription is \$40.00, with free updates during your subscription. This allows the student to practice and turn in assignments without being pressured on time or being disrupted by other students waiting to use the laptop. For more information on SmartMusic, visit the B.L. Gray Band website or go to the SmartMusic website at [smartmusic.com](http://smartmusic.com).



## **BAND GRADING POLICY**

Grades in band reflect the work and effort of the student and are not based on talent.

### **Minor assignments: 40%**

- Binder and/or music and supplies checks
- Locker checks
- Quizzes-playing or written
- Sectional attendance
- Uniform checks

### **Major assignments: 60%**

- Participation, because band is a performing fine art participation is essential.
- Playing tests over pre-assigned material in class or on SmartMusic**
- Concert Performances**

### **Performance Grades**

All B. L. Gray Junior High Band performances are mandatory. Each performance is equivalent to a test grade, and will be either 100 or a zero. If a student participates in the performance, a 100 is recorded; if a student does not participate in a performance and his/her absence is unexcused, a 0 is recorded. A student will not receive full credit for a performance if they are not in the designated uniform. The Winter and Spring concerts and UIL Contest count as two test grades. Other performances during the year typically include: SPTSO, Veteran's Day, JH football games, pep rallies, and others as scheduled.

If the student has an emergency or valid conflict to not attend the band performance, the parent must contact and notify the director. The student will have the opportunity to make up the performance grade missed by typing a musical related report. The student will have one week after the missed performance to turn in this report. Specifics of the report (ex. subject, length, font, etc.) may be obtained by the director.

Students who will miss a performance due to participation in another school sponsored activity must notify the band directors of the conflict at least 5 days prior to the event.

### **Participation Grades**

Each student begins each week with a 100 for his/her participation grade.

Points may be added to the participation grade by attending or participating in the following:

- All-Region Band Auditions +15 points
- All-Region Band Placement (must participate in Clinic/Concert) +20 points
- Attendance at a professional musical event (bring ticket stub) +10 points
- Attendance at any school's band/orchestra concert/contest + 5 points

Points may be deducted from the participation grade for the following:

- Disrupting class/talking during rehearsal -20 points and/or discipline form
- Instrument or music not in assigned area -20 points
- Unprepared for class (no instrument, pencil, binder, music, supplies) -25 points
- Chewing gum -30 points and/or discipline form

### **Make Up Work**

If a student is absent for any reason, it is his/her responsibility to find out what work was missed. A student has two days to make up missed work/tests. If the work was assigned in class before the absence, it is due the day the student comes back. For a missed chair test, the student must arrange a time with the director before or after school. The correct chair will then be assigned.

If a student may not participate in a required band activity due to ineligibility or disciplinary action, an alternate assignment will be given. These assignments may be written or performance oriented.

## **Junior High Marching Band**

**In the fall semester, all band students will participate in marching band activities. Marching band will satisfy the district's requirement for physical education. Students will be marching and need to dress appropriately. There will be performances at football games. If a student has special circumstances that would preclude them from participation, a medical doctor's excuse will be required. This information should also be on file with the school nurse.**

## **REQUIREMENTS AND ELIGIBILITY**

**Performing musical organizations require rehearsal outside school hours and participation in concerts and contests. It will be the responsibility of members of the bands to attend those rehearsals and performances unless excused by the director. Attendance at the extra functions is mandatory, and will be considered as part of the earned grade, along with classroom performance.**

### **"No Pass – No Play"**

The "No Pass – No Play" ruling does not affect co-curricular activities.

**Band concerts and sectional rehearsals are co-curricular.**

The following definitions of co-curricular and extracurricular are taken from the Texas Administrative Code 97.113 section M subsection 2 and 3.

*Co-curricular activities are an extension of classroom instruction in which participation is by the entire class or a significant portion thereof. They relate directly to and enhance student learning of essential elements through participation, demonstration, illustration, and observation.*

*Extracurricular activities are school-sponsored activities which are not directly related to instruction of the essential elements, but they may have an indirect relation to some areas of the curriculum. They offer worthwhile and significant contributions to a student's personal, physical, and social development. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right, and students must meet specific requirements in order to participate.*

No Pass – No Play is the regulation for all extracurricular activities. If a student receives a grade below 70 in any subject on his/her report card, that student will be ineligible. This ineligibility period begins 7 days following the end of the grading period for which the failing grade was received. The student can regain eligibility status if he/she has passing grades in **EVERY SUBJECT** at the end of the three week period. If passing grades are attained, the student will regain eligibility 7 days following the end of that three week grading period. If passing grades are not attained, the student will remain ineligible for three more weeks, at which time eligibility will be reevaluated using the next report card.

The three week grades can only grant eligibility, they cannot take it away. Report card grades establish eligibility or ineligibility.

Eligibility is granted or taken away on a delayed 7 calendar day schedule. It begins and ends 7 days following the grading period.

Remember that participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Restrictions may be placed on participation with regard to attendance at sectional rehearsals, behavior in the classroom and any other restrictions that the band directors feel are necessary for the extracurricular activity to be meaningful to the student.

**B. L. GRAY JR. HIGH BAND**  
**STUDENT-PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT/PERMISSION SLIP/MEDICAL FORM**

(PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Work / Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICAL RELEASE**

In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, as determined by the band director, first aid staff person and/or another health staff person, I hereby give permission to transport and/or provide medical care for my child, or make referral of the child to the nearest medical facility in case of major medical service needs. I have listed other medical information that might be helpful. I understand that the school, directors, and sponsors assume no financial responsibility for any medical services received by my child. The school, directors, or sponsors cannot administer to your child any form of medication.

**Health History: (check)**

\_\_\_\_ Diabetes  
\_\_\_\_ Orthopedic Problems  
\_\_\_\_ Asthma  
\_\_\_\_ Epilepsy  
\_\_\_\_ Cardiac Problems  
\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Allergies: (check)**

\_\_\_\_ Aspirin  
\_\_\_\_ Penicillin  
\_\_\_\_ Sulfa  
\_\_\_\_ Insect Stings  
\_\_\_\_ Tetracycline  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Has your child had a current tetanus shot within six years? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Do you know of any health factors that make it advisable for your child to follow a limited program of physical activity or from participating in any activities? If yes, please explain.

**PERMISSION FORM**

I have read and understand what is in this handbook and what is expected of a B.L. Gray Band student. I also hereby give permission for my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ to travel with the B.L. Gray Jr. High Band on any trips that need to be made in conjunction with any band activities.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instrument