**Bellair Cougar Beginning Band Handbook**

Welcome to the Bellair Cougar Beginning Band! I am so excited to have all of you in band and can’t wait to have an excellent year! During this year we will work to develop your musical training through specialized instruction in each student’s instrument two times a week.

The Bellair Cougar Beginning Band will use a combination of music, handouts, **Sound Innovations, book 1**, and other supplemental materials throughout the year. The only paper resource you are expected to provide is a copy of **Sound Innovations, book 1** for your instrument. If you need a copy, Music and Arts Center on Bell Rd. and 53rd Ave will have books and other supplies available.

**Beginning Band will begin the week of August 19th**. The 5th grade Cougar Band meets two times a week during the school day. Schedules will be given to all students during the first week of school. Students should attend their first band lesson even if they do not have an instrument. We will be reviewing classroom rules and procedures and learning the beginning basics of their instruments.

For up-to-date information throughout the year, visit our website at: http://bellairmusic.weebly.com. Please feel free to contact me at Karen.dicker@dvusd.org or (602)467-5754.

Cougar Band Guidelines

I’m sure this will be a very rewarding experience for student and parent alike. I would like to explain some aspects of our program.

***Role of the Student***

Your primary responsibility is to learn. By joining band you have made a commitment to yourself as well as to the entire band. The following list of behaviors will help you to achieve your goal:

1. Put forth effort and always participate.
2. Follow directions and class rules.
3. Give and ask respectfully for attention.
4. Respect, accept, and understand others and their right to an education.
5. Be self-directed, use time wisely, and have self-control.
6. Ask permission to use school property or the property of others.
7. Handle music, instruments, and all materials with care,

Students in band are expected to behave in an appropriate manner during all band activities. This includes class sessions, concerts, and extra-curricular activities. Therefore, it is our responsibility to behave in a manner that does credit to our band and our school.

***Grades***

Students in band may be graded in the following areas:

1. Class attendance, punctuality, participation, and preparation.

A student’s genuine interest in Band is absolutely necessary. Participation is reflected in being prepared with instrument/music/pencil every class, positive classroom effort, cooperation, and a true desire to succeed.

1. Homework and tests.

Students will be awarded points for various assignments in band class that include small homework assignments and quizzes (both **playing** and **written**) on new skills and information taught in class. Playing test will be given in private or group settings on music that is being prepared in class each quarter.

1. Concert attendance.

Performances are outcomes of many hours of practice and rehearsal. These performances are viewed as the final exam and are graded accordingly. More information regarding performances can be found below.

1. Practice time.

All band students are **required** to practice **outside of school.** This is considered **homework.** In order to continue to improve, students must spend the time practically applying the things we have learned in class on their instruments. Without this, we will not be able to advance to our true potential. Parents will need to verify this through practice sheets. Which will be available in class. Students are responsible for maintaining and submitting these sheets to Ms. Dicker. More information on Practicing can be found below.

1. Instrument care.

Please see the Instrument Care section below for more information.

***Concert Performances***

**Concert performances are a very important part of the curriculum and attendance of every student is both needed and expected.** Performances are truly a group effort and it is critical to continued growth and success that everyone is in attendance. Excuses from performances will be handled on an individual basis and MUST be in writing and signed by a parent. Since Band is a grade subject, sporting events and recreational activities are not considered an excuse for missing a performance. I realize there are times when prior commitments will conflict with band activities. In cases where absolutely nothing can be worked out, I will need a written excuse within 2 weeks after the announcement of the performance date and the student will receive credit for the performance after mandatory make-up work is turned in. Unexcused absences from a performance may result in a lowered grade for the quarter.

***Concert/Assembly Attire***

Each student is responsible for having appropriate concert and assembly attire.

Concert Attire:

* Dressy white or black on top (no t-shirts, strapless, or spaghetti straps)
* Dressy black on bottom (no shorts; skirts must be knee length or longer)
* Dressy black shoes (no flip-flops; please make sure you can walk in them)
  + ALL attire must fit within the school dress code.

Assembly Attire:

* Concert attire **or,**
* Bellair Band t-shirt on top
* Jeans or nice looking bottoms (no holes/tears; shorts ok; skirts must be knee length or longer)
  + ALL attire must fit within the school dress code.

Inappropriate dress does affect grades.

***Practicing***

During class times, students will learn many techniques for making practicing fun, effective and efficient at home. Practicing can range from working on a specific section of music or musical concept that your student is having trouble with to just playing this that are fun! Students are also encouraged to practice together! Duets are a great way to practice more than just notes and are extremely helpful to playing in an ensemble. A good mix of both during each practice session is encouraged. To earn practice time you may:

* **Practice at home on the instrument you play in the Bellair Band**. Current music and concepts that are being worked on in class are encouraged but do not have to be the extent of practicing.
* **Participate as a performer in an instrumental ensemble on the instrument you play in the Bellair Band**. This cannot be your only practice time, but this can count towards some practicing. Check with Ms. Dicker for the maximum practice time that can be counted for participating in an instrumental ensemble outside of school.
* **Take private lessons on the instruments you play in the Bellair Band**.Taking private lessons is a great way to further your ability on your instrument. Through taking private lessons, you get one-on-one time with a specialist on your instrument. For a list of private lesson teachers, contact Ms. Dicker.
* **Attend a concert as a non-performer.** Classical (concert band, opera, ballet, orchestra, etc.), church-related concerts, some popular music and so forth. TO gain practice time for attending a concert, students must turn in a 1-page or less paper highlighting things that they heard that relate to concepts that we have been learning/working on in class. There are many free opportunities to listen to music, especially within our Deer Valley School District. For a full list of Deer Valley concert attending opportunities, please see the website at bellairmusic.weebly.com.

**Smart Music** is also a GREAT tool for practicing at home! This tool has the majority of our band repertoire, all the exercises from our book, and solo music for your instrument! This lets you play with a full ensemble, fun background music, or practice with piano accompaniment (for solo works). It also tells you if you are playing the right notes and rhythms (when using a microphone connected to your computer). I fully recommend this outstanding tool for all band students! For more information, please go to http://www.smartmusic.com.

***Instruments***

It is important to both the student and the band that instruments are in good working order. Repairs should be made during school vacations so that the instrument will be available during school. If an instrument breaks and must go to the shop during school time, ask the shop for a loaner—most reputable shops off this service. If they don’t perhaps you should try another shop. Please notify me before you send an instrument to the shop. I can make many minor repairs in my office.

Periodically throughout the year we will be having instrument maintenance checks to help avoid dirt build up and costly breaks to your instrument. Students will be taught how to keep their instrument clean and in good working order.

Below is a suggested list of items for each instrument to maintain good working order and help avoid costly repairs:

Flute

* Cleaning Swab (silk preferred)
* Folding Music Stand (for practicing at home)
* Sound Innovations, Book 1

Clarinet and Saxophone

* One box of reeds
  + 2-strength for the beginning of learning the instrument
  + 2 ½-strength (we will go over in class how to tell when you are ready to move to the next strength)
    - At least **3 reeds in your case at all times!**
* Cork Crease
* Cleaning Swab (silk preferred)
* Folding Music Stand (for practicing at home)
* Sound Innovations, Book 1

Trumpet, Euphonium (Baritone), Tuba

* Valve oil
* Tuning slide grease
* Mouthpiece brush
* Folding Music Stand (for practicing at home)
* Sound Innovations, Book 1

French Horn

* Rotary Valve oil (different from Trumpet valve oil!)
* Tuning slide grease
* Mouthpiece brush
* Folding Music Stand (for practicing at home)
* Sound Innovations, Book 1

Trombone

* Slide oil/cream
* Tuning slide grease
* Mouthpiece brush
* Folding Music Stand (for practicing at home)
* Sound Innovations, Book 1

Percussion (when you rent the instrument please get the Bell Set AND Snare drum w/Drum Pad)

* 1 pair xylo/bell mallets
* 1 pair Concert Snare drum sticks (2B) (these are different than drum set sticks)
* Practice Pad
* Folding Music Stand (for practicing at home)
* Sound Innovations, Book 1
  + Please bring ALL equipment to every rehearsal unless Ms. Dicker specifically says it will not be needed.

***Please fill out and return the attached form to Ms. Dicker. By signing this form, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the above information.***