



1350 McNeil Road, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714  
Telephone: 407-320-1550

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Dear Parents and Students:

**Welcome to the Teague Band program!** This handbook was written to familiarize you with the many aspects of the program, and to ensure an enjoyable and educationally rewarding musical experience. I realize you are deluged with reading material from the school at the beginning of the year, but PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ ALL OF THE HANDBOOK! After you have read this handbook, sign the last page, detach the form, and return it to me. Band students will be held accountable for the information contained herein, so please keep the rest of the handbook for future reference.

Band is an elective and selective course. It differs from the general music class, or any other course on the enrichment wheel. In that, we seek to develop and put to use a SKILL. It involves learning math concepts and applying them (rhythm), learning and applying a new system of notation, developing fine motor skills, developing our ability to really hear, and becoming *sensitive*: to the sounds we make, to the sounds others make, to the musical demands of the piece. It requires cooperation with a large team of musicians, working together toward a common goal. In addition, of course it also requires extra practice at home, occasional after school rehearsals and performances, and investment in an instrument. Band involves responsibility to the group. The sound each student makes changes the sound of the entire group. One student can literally ruin the sound of an entire 80-piece band!

I hope it is obvious that band is not for everyone. On the other hand, in many years of teaching, I have encountered very few students who lacked the musical and mental skills necessary to do a competent job in one of our bands. I have encountered dozens who lacked the desire to do what was required of them to succeed. If you have heard the Teague Bands perform, you probably realized you were listening to a very special group of people. They have developed skills and have had learning experiences that will be useful in any endeavor they pursue. They will also have acquired a very enjoyable leisure time activity, performing in amateur or semi-professional groups. Membership in a college band can make a large university seem a little smaller, and a lot friendlier.

I hope your membership in the Teague Band will be a rewarding and productive musical experience. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Gary Bottomley  
Band Director