

Welcome to the Wiley Elementary School Band!



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Wiley Elementary School band! I thank you for choosing to be a part of our band, and look forward to making music with you this year.

As a member of the Wiley Band, you have chosen to embark on a rewarding journey with a fine group of people. Our band isn't just something to do before school; it's a team and a family. Students, band is a place where you can have fun, meet new friends, and build musical skills that you can enjoy for the rest of your life. Parents, band will give you the experience of a lifetime, too--the joy of enriching children's lives with music (whether you're musically inclined or not!)

You may find band to be very different from other music classes you've taken in the past. Since band is a team, it functions best when everyone--students, parents, and director--brings forth their best effort. In the Wiley Band, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of behavior, and are committed to doing our very best every time we play.

This handbook is designed as a resource to answer your band-related questions throughout the school year. Please read and keep this handbook, and feel free to contact me if you need any band-related help or advice. Best wishes, and I look forward to sharing a year of wonderful musical experiences with you!

Your Band Director,

Christina Thompson

my philosophy

I believe that music is a powerful medium that can help students discover their unique capabilities, build positive relationships with their peers, and foster meaningful connections with the larger community. As director, my job isn't just waving the baton--it's conducting myself and our band in a way that brings the benefits of music into the lives of our bandmembers and community neighbors.

As band director, I am committed to:

- Providing a safe place for students to grow musically
- Helping students develop a feeling of musical competency
- Guiding students toward creating their signature musical sound and style
- Fostering students' love of music and an appreciation for fellow musicians
- Helping students begin to establish their place in the global community of musicians
- Giving back to the community through music
- Cultivating meaningful partnerships among students, teachers, families, and community members

what parents need to do

Parents are a vital part of children's music education. A child's success in music often depends on the level of support the parent gives. An encouraging comment about your child's practice, cheerful attendance at band concerts, and a positive attitude about your child's efforts can give your son or daughter the confidence to excel musically. Here are four things I ask of all Wiley band parents:

- 1. Be informed.** Please read this handbook and all band correspondence. You'll not only be "in the know," but you'll also model responsibility and commitment to your child.
- 2. Teach your child the value of practice.** Helping your child learn to practice is the single most powerful thing you can do to support your child's musical development. Treat practice as homework, and make it part of your daily routine by setting up a special place and time for your child to play at home. All Wiley Band students should practice a minimum of 15 minutes per day, 5 days per week.
- 3. Realize that greatness takes time.** Beginning musicians are not going to sound like the pros you hear on the radio. When listening to your child practice or perform, train yourself to focus on growth and progress. And please, NEVER joke about your child's sound--it hurts more than you'd think.
- 4. Support your director.** Your band director has made it her life's work to help kids through music. She's on your side, and is here to support and nurture your child's musical growth. Please keep this in mind in your interactions with the director, and treat her with respect and kindness. Also, please follow the director's policies and encourage your child to do the same. They are the result of years of successful teaching, and are in place to give you an excellent band experience.

how a band kid should act

Although our band meets outside school hours, the expectations for behavior are the same as they are during the school day. Our band joins the rest of the Wiley Community in practicing Positive Behavior Support, and band students are expected to live by The Wiley Way at all rehearsals and performances.

Band students are typically some of the finest young people in the school. At all times, you should be able to say these things about yourself:

Respect Yourself.

If I make a mistake on a song, I laugh it off and try again.
I practice daily so I'm prepared for band rehearsal.
I am a good example to those around me.

Respect Others.

I don't laugh at or make fun of other people's playing.
I have kind words to say to my fellow band members at all times.
I allow my band teacher to teach without interruptions.

Respect Property.

I take good care of my instrument and respect my bandmates' instruments.
I hold my instrument securely so I don't drop it.
I put my instrument together the way Ms. Thompson showed me.
If I am not a percussionist, I don't touch the percussion equipment.

YOU HAVE A CHOICE!

You are an important member of our band, and your actions will affect everyone else in our group. Your behavior will determine how much we learn and how well we play, and will also show the community what the Wiley Band is all about. ***When you choose your actions in band, always remember that you are choosing your consequences as well.*** When you do your best, band class becomes energized with music-making excitement! However, poor behavior can ruin people's good impression of our band--and even worse, it can make learning music more difficult and less fun.

HOW MS. THOMPSON WILL HELP

One of Ms. Thompson's most important jobs is to help band students develop character traits to help them excel both in the band room and beyond. Throughout the year, Ms. Thompson will model productive behavior, establish helpful classroom routines, and provide boundaries and guidance to help students learn to make good behavior choices. Through group reflection and teacher-student meetings, behavior issues in the Wiley Band will be used as opportunities to help students grow.

a typical band rehearsal

Beginning Band rehearses on Mondays and Wednesdays, and Continuing Band rehearses on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All rehearsals will be held from 8-8:45am in the Spanish room at Wiley.

Parents, please drop students off for band rehearsal between 7:45 and 7:55am. This will give them a chance to get water, unpack their instruments, and prepare for a successful rehearsal.

Before class, please use the restroom and get a drink of water. Please finish any food or gum before you enter the band room--remember, food and band instruments *do not mix!*

When you're ready, sit down quietly and assemble your instrument and music stand.

Don't play until Ms. Thompson gives the cue; use this time to quietly count rhythms or practice fingerings.

If you have a question, do not come up to Ms. Thompson before class; instead, raise your hand and wait for her to call on you. During class, please raise your hand for permission to leave your seat or to ask a question.

In class, we'll warm up, count rhythms, work on pieces of music together, and learn new things. This is a great time to listen, ask questions, and practice The Wiley Way.

Sometimes, Ms. Thompson may ask you or your section to play alone in class. This isn't to torture you; it's a way to make our music sound better. When I ask you to play solo, it helps other kids understand specific musical techniques--but it makes you a better musician, too! Also, anyone who plays alone in class gets a round of applause for their courage. ☺

When class ends, Ms. Thompson will dismiss you to pack up your instrument and take it to the media center. Neatly store your instruments in the cubbies backstage, and have a great day!

financial, attendance, and weather policies

Because the Wiley Band receives no funding from WCPSS, we cover our operating expenses by charging a small, nonrefundable fee for each band student. This fee includes Band Camp, performances, sheet music, and twice-weekly rehearsals with a licensed music educator. **The Band Fee is \$125 per child, per semester.**

A \$25, nonrefundable, tax-deductible donation to the Wiley Band Boosters secures your child's spot in the Wiley Band. If you have more than one child enrolling in band, please add \$10 for each additional child.

Payment for fall semester is due by May 18, and for spring semester by December 16. Please make your check payable to Wiley PTA. The Band Fee does not cover the cost of purchasing an instrument, cleaning supplies, concert attire, a band book, or a music stand for your child.

For families facing economic hardship, the Wiley Band provides a scholarship program to help defray the costs associated with participating in band. Scholarship students are eligible for a reduced band fee, and may use booster-owned instruments free of charge during the school year. For more information about the Wiley Band scholarship program, please contact Christina Thompson (Band Director).

Rehearsal attendance is vital to our band's success. Students who are absent for three or more rehearsals in any given month will be issued a warning. If a student receives two attendance warnings during the course of one semester, his/her membership with the band will be terminated without a refund.

Students arriving after rehearsal has begun will not be permitted to rehearse with their instruments. Late students should follow along and write down the homework so they will be prepared for the next rehearsal.

If your child is absent, he/she is expected to obtain the day's homework assignment from the band website.

No portion of the Band Fee will be refunded if your child is tardy or absent from a rehearsal, concert, or Band Camp. If your teacher must miss a rehearsal, she will offer a make-up time before the end of May.

If Wake County Schools are closed for inclement weather on a rehearsal or concert day, our band will not meet. If the schools are operating on a 2-hour delay, we will also meet two hours late. If we must miss a rehearsal or concert due to inclement weather, the director will do her best to arrange a make-up date.

all about band camp

The beginning the school year is a very demanding time for young musicians. Beginners require consistent, individualized instruction to build a strong musical foundation. Likewise, experienced students need support to rebuild their playing skills and prepare for the enhanced expectations of Continuing Band. To provide this vital support, the Wiley Band requires **all band students** to attend Band Camp before school begins.

Band Camp is part of our program here at Wiley, and is offered at no additional cost to all band students. **Our 2012 Band Camp will take place August 20-24 in the Wiley Elementary cafeteria.**

The first three days of Camp are sectionals for beginners only. In sectionals, Ms. Thompson helps small groups of students learn the basics of their instruments. The final two days are full band rehearsals for all students.

2012 BAND CAMP SCHEDULE:

Monday, August 20 - Wednesday, August 22 (Beginners only)

Flutes meet 9:00-9:45am

Trumpets meet 12:30-1:15 pm

Clarinets and Saxes meet 10:15-11:00am

Trombones meet 1:30-2:15pm

Percussionists meet 11:30-12:15pm

Thursday, August 23 & Friday, August 24 (Beginning and Continuing students)

Full Band Rehearsals for Beginners: 10-11am

Full Band Rehearsals for Continuing Band students: 12-1pm

Make sure to bring: Your instrument, music stand, *Standard of Excellence* book, and a positive attitude!

all about instruments

Choosing an Instrument:

Late in the school year, Ms. Thompson will hold two Instrument Show and Tell sessions for students who are interested in joining band. At Show and Tell, Ms. Thompson will play several band instruments and briefly discuss their characteristics and challenges. Then, students will be able to try each instrument. By the end of the last Show and Tell, each student should have an idea of which instrument he or she wants to play in band. **Parents have until the first day of band camp to obtain an instrument for their child.**

A NOTE ON PERCUSSION

Percussion is a very popular instrument family, but often for the wrong reasons. Many children mistakenly think percussion is "easy" or that playing percussion is all about "rocking out" on drums. Many of these children are sorely disappointed when they discover that percussion is challenging, and requires that they learn more instruments than anyone else in the band. I strongly encourage parents of future percussionists to discuss the following with their children:

- 1. Percussion is more than just drums. You will start on bells, and will have to learn to read music just like everyone else. Drumset comes later, much later.
- 2. Percussion instruments are as difficult as every other instrument in the band.
- 3. You have to build a strong foundation to "rock out" successfully.

Three ways to get an instrument:

1. RENT IT.

Many music stores rent instruments for a monthly fee. (See the list of music stores on the next page.) This is a good short-term option, but usually ends up costing more than buying a nice used instrument.

2. BORROW IT.

If you know a friend or family member who has a band instrument they don't use, ask if your child can borrow it to use in the Wiley Band. This can be an easy, low-cost way to obtain an instrument for your child. Make sure, though, to make an agreement with your friend and put all the details in writing; for example, who will pay for repairs, and when the instrument needs to be returned.

3. BUY IT.

There are three basic types of instruments that are available: beginner, step-up, and professional. For our students, I recommend beginner instruments. These instruments are designed with the young student in mind and will take a moderate amount of abuse.

While new instruments look pretty, many families find that used instruments are a better choice for their child's early years in band. Used instruments have withstood the test of time, are less expensive, and often are better made than their new counterparts. There are many places in the Triangle to find high-quality used beginner instruments at great prices--at Marsh Woodwinds, Music-Go-Round, and even on Craigslist! If you find a Craigslist instrument, call Ms. Thompson before you buy--she'll be glad to visit the seller and check it out for you.

Changing instruments:

Switching instruments early in one's musical career tends to make learning music more difficult and more time-consuming. Every instrument in the band is equally difficult to play, and each has its own set of problems for the player to solve. You will not be able to conquer these problems overnight—just like with a friend, you have to spend many years with your instrument to really know it. So, I ask students to commit to learning only ONE instrument while at Wiley Elementary.

Required class materials:

Students are asked to have all their supplies by the first day of Band Camp.

For flutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handkerchief (to clean flute)• Cleaning rod• <i>Standard of Excellence</i>, Book 1 for Flute• Music stand	For clarinets: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FOUR reeds- Vandoren reeds, strength 2 or 2.5• Swab• Cork Grease• <i>Standard of Excellence</i>, Book 1 for clarinet• Music stand
For trumpets: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valve oil• Tuning slide grease• <i>Standard of Excellence</i>, Book 1 for trumpet• Music Stand	For trombones: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slide oil or cream• Tuning slide grease• <i>Standard of Excellence</i>, Book 1 for trombone• Music stand
For percussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 8" drum practice pad• 1 pair of Vic Firth SD-1 snare sticks• 1 bell set• 1 pair hard plastic mallets• <i>Standard of Excellence</i>, Book 1 for Drums & Mallet Percussion	For saxophones: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FOUR Vandoren reeds, strength 2 or 2.5• Swab• <i>Standard of Excellence</i>, Book 1 for alto sax• Music stand

Where to get your supplies

Burrage Music Company

4900 Green Road, Raleigh (872-0211)
(Offers a rental instrument program)

2112 Percussion

1003 E. Whitaker Mill. Rd, Raleigh
(833-0046) (For all things percussion!)

Marsh Woodwinds

707 N. Person St., Raleigh NC 27604 (839-0536)
(Vintage instrument sales, very good repairs)

Music and Arts Center

426 Crossroads Blvd., Cary (854-0024)
(Instrument sales and rentals)

Music-Go-Round

421 Crossroads Blvd., Cary (851-2252)
(Used instruments)

Burt Music

1341 Kildaire Farm Road, Cary (469-2922)
(Instrument sales and repairs)

all about concerts

Wiley Band students will have many chances to perform throughout the year. We will present three evening concerts at school, as well as some exciting "gigs" around town. Our concert dates are listed online at <http://www.wileyelementaryband.com/events.html>.

stores listed in this handbook. If I tell you to take your horn to the shop, please do it as soon as possible! Sometimes neglecting a little problem with an instrument can make it into a big problem down the road. Also, if you have known something is wrong with your instrument for a while, **DO NOT wait until the day of a performance to tell me**, as I will be able to do nothing to help you.

What if I can't make it to a concert?

Please tell me as soon as possible! The more advance notice you can give, the better. We work hard to prepare for our concerts. Band members who don't show up or cancel at the last minute let their band--and themselves--down.

in closing...

Students, in joining the band, you have taken your first step onto the path that every great musician throughout history has walked. Band is going to be fun, but be aware that there will be some spots on your path that are challenging and hard to pass. When the going gets tough, remember that you have the ability to keep practicing and beat any challenges that come your way. Also remember that your teachers and parents are here to help you become the best musician you can be.

To Parents: Young people need positive direction in their lives, and our community is in constant need of good music and happy news. Let's make the Wiley Band a positive force that provides both! Working together, we can design a band that not only influences students' lives for the better, but also allows our students to influence the *world* for the better. I invite you, Band Parents, to become active in our program. Communicate with your director, encourage your children in their practice, and volunteer with the Wiley Band Boosters. This is your band, too.

Many thanks for your support and best wishes for a safe, happy, and successful school year!

Got questions? Email Ms. Thompson at
director@wileyelementaryband.com

Or, visit the official Wiley Band website!
<http://www.wileyelementaryband.com>