

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 after 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.

Please drop your student 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 ask you to pack up your instrument, and then line up to take your instruments to the media center. Carefully store your instruments in the media center, and have a great day!

financial and attendance policies

Because the Wiley Band does not receive funding from WCPSS, we cover our operating expenses by charging a small, nonrefundable fee for each child enrolled in band. This fee includes Band Camp, sectionals, performances, sheet music, and twice-weekly rehearsals with a licensed music educator. **The Band Fee for the 2010-2011 school year is \$110 per child, per semester.**

A \$25, non-refundable, 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 to your donation.

Payment for fall semester is due by May 13, and for spring semester by December 17. 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 borrow booster-owned instruments to use free of charge during the school year. For more information about the Wiley Band scholarship program, please contact Band Booster President [Laura Broadbelt](#).

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 meet as scheduled. If we must miss a rehearsal or concert due to inclement weather, the director will do her best to arrange a make-up date.

Students must be picked up promptly following rehearsals. Parents who pick up students later than fifteen minutes after rehearsal ends will be assessed a \$1 per minute late fee.

all about band camp

The beginning of one's musical career is a very full time. There are instruments to choose, procedures to learn, and boatloads of new information and skills to understand. During their first days of playing, band students need frequent and individualized support to help them feel comfortable with their instruments and begin building a strong musical foundation. To provide this necessary support, the Wiley Band asks **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 2010 Band Camp will take place August 16-20 in the Wiley Elementary cafeteria.**

The first three days of Band Camp will be sectional rehearsals for beginners only. In sectionals, small groups of the same instrument will work with a master teacher to "learn the ropes" of their instrument. The remaining two days will be full band rehearsals for both Beginning and Continuing Band students.

2010 BAND CAMP SCHEDULE:

Monday, August 16 - Wednesday, August 18 (Beginners only)

Flutes meet 9:00-9:45am	Percussionists meet 1-1:45pm
Clarinets meet 10:15-11:00am	Trumpets meet 2:00-2:45pm
Saxes meet 11:30am - 12:15pm	Trombones meet 3:15-4pm

Thursday, August 19 & Friday, August 20 (Beginning and Continuing students)

Full Band Rehearsals for Beginners: 10:30-11:30am

Full Band Rehearsals for Continuing Band students: 1-2pm

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

all about instruments

Choosing an Instrument:

Late in the school year, Ms. Thompson will hold two Band Instrument Show and Tell Sessions for all students who have signed up for next year's Beginning Band. At Show and Tell, Ms. Thompson will play each instrument for the students and briefly discuss each instrument's characteristics and challenges. Then, students will be able to try each band 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 Raleigh 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:

- Handkerchief (to clean flute)
- Cleaning rod
- *Standard of Excellence*, Book 1 for Flute
- Music stand

For clarinets:

- FOUR reeds- Vandoren reeds, strength 2 or 2.5
- Swab
- Cork Grease
- *Standard of Excellence*, Book 1 for clarinet
- Music stand

For trumpets:

- Valve oil
- Tuning slide grease
- *Standard of Excellence*, Book 1 for trumpet

For trombones:

- Slide oil or cream
- Tuning slide grease
- *Standard of Excellence*, Book 1 for trombone
- Music stand

For percussion:

- 1 Remo 8" drum practice pad
- 1 pair of Vic Firth SD-1 snare sticks
- 1 bell set
- 1 pair Lexan Clear plastic mallets
- *Standard of Excellence*, Book 1 for Drums & Mallet Percussion

For saxophones:

- FOUR Vandoren reeds, strength 2 or 2.5
- Swab
- *Standard of Excellence*, 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>. I will do my best to notify band families of any changes to our performance dates well in advance.

