

FLUTE

Welcome to G.C. Hawley Middle School! I am so glad that you want to be a part of the band! Since you have decided to play the flute, here are a few things you should know.

How To Take Care Of Your Instrument

Use the swab every day before putting your flute back in the case. The most delicate parts of the flute are the paper-like pads underneath the keys. As you play the flute, water vapor from your breath condenses inside the flute and settles on these pads. These pads can break down over time because of this condensation, like the way your teeth can get cavities. So, use the swab that came in your Cleaning Kit to clean out the condensation every day before you put the flute away in its case. You may also use a flute cleaning rod with a cotton cloth, if that is what you have.

When you put your flute together or take it apart, do not twist the keys. This is the most common cause of \$\$ expensive flute repairs. When assembling or disassembling your flute, hold it by the ends that do not have keys on them. If you grip and twist the delicate keys, they will bend and your flute will stop working.

What To Expect In The First Few Weeks

Spend lots of time practicing on just the Head-Joint. The most difficult part of learning to play the flute is simply getting a consistent sound on the head-joint. For the first few weeks, this is what you need to practice for 15 minutes *every day*. Place the head-joint in position under your lips, and blow a steady note for 5 seconds. Then put it down, put it back and repeat. Do this over and over for 15 minutes. Practice this in addition to practicing the music that we are studying in class.

Listen to professional flute players. Listening to great professional musicians on your instrument will inspire you and help you develop your “ear” for what you want to sound like. Get on Youtube or Spotify and search for “flute”. Have fun exploring! Make sure you listen to the Mozart Flute Concerto 313.

The Website and the Bandmate Chromatic Tuner iOS/Android App

www.JustinDickson.com/Band Our “textbook” is all online, on this website. You can also find information about our band program and links to articles about learning to play your instrument.

Bandmate Chromatic Tuner is a free app for Apple and Android phones and tablets that I designed, and I would like all of our band members and/or your parents to download it. It is a tuner that shows the note you are playing on a music staff, so you can check if you are playing the right note or note while you are practicing. It will really make things easier for you to learn!



Playing Tests, Practice Tips, and Expectations For Band Members

How we do tests in band. Your grade in band depends on passing our Playing Tests. You will have four tests each quarter, and you pass when you can play the music correctly. If you pass, you get a 100. If you do not pass, you get a 0, but you can come back and try again as many times as you want until the end of the grading period. The goal is for you to practice until you get it right (“mastery-based education”).

How to practice. Slow down. If you are having trouble with certain notes, practice them very slowly, and use Bandmate to make sure you are playing the right notes. Do not try to play the whole song at once, but rather stop and fix your mistakes. Just go over a few notes at a time, until you can play without mistakes.

Class rules. #1 Listen respectfully while your Director is speaking. #2 If it’s not yours, don’t touch it. #3 No gum, food or drinks except water. #3 is a rule while practicing at home, too, or your instrument will be ruined.

Everyone is important, do your part. Everyone is an important member of the band, and everyone has a job to do. As a member of the Hawley Middle School band, your job is to learn your music, to practice until it’s right, to take care of your instrument and bring it to class every day, to listen respectfully to your Band Director and follow directions, to be okay with making mistakes and keep trying, to help each other, to attend every concert, to work hard and have fun!