

From The Podium

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Happy October! It's wonderful to see that the weather is getting cooler and see the leaves are changing. September was a busy month, so let's get you caught up on what has been happening since we last talked.

Let's start with the 7th and 8th Grader's first two performances of the year. Their first performance was at the Crestview Homecoming Pep-Rally. This performance opportunity came about my first year here. The HS Band Director at the time - Joe Barrow - decided to wait until school was about to start to inform me "Hey Hugh. You have a performance in three weeks at Crestview for their Pep-Rally." Well, I was pretty stressed out. Here I was in my first month in Graham and we had a huge performance. YIKES! We got started getting music prepped on day one and had a good run that day. This wound up being my favorite gig of the year next to our Christmas Brass World Tour. Now here we are, 16 years, and another great performance in the books. They were just great. The best comment came from a lady who stopped Mr. Freeman at the store to comment on how wonderful the Star Spangled Banner was performed. Such high praise!

The second performance was with the HS Band this past Friday evening. This was SO much fun! The kiddos played and acted like a class act the whole evening. It was really fun when the kids got to play in the stands by themselves. They really held their own. Mr. Kidd told me after the game that he was able to hear the JH Band from the end zone. That's pretty cool. Thank you to the parents who were able to help with the pizza party afterwards. You were lifesavers! I received a comment from one of the parents on how well behaved and courteous the kids were when they got their food. That is a compliment that I love. The kids left the HS Band Hall virtually spotless. These are the life skills that will take them far. We couldn't be prouder.

We try to make sure that we communicate with everyone in the program as efficiently and often as

possible. One avenue we use is Charms. We also use Charms to manage students, inventory, and finances. It is very important that parents update their child's information as well as their own. Please make sure that this is done. It will make my life do much easier. You can access this through www.charmsoffice.com. If you are a new student, your user name is GrahamJHBand and the password is their five digit Skyward/Lunch number. If you have a 7th or 8th Grade student and need me to reset your password, just let me know. Please update ASAP. Also, please don't forget our other outlets for communication and social media. We are on Facebook at Graham Junior High School Band, Instagram under gjhsdogieband, Twitter @GJHSDogieband, and Remind (text gjhsband17 to 81010). We want to keep you in the loop.

We are in our second six weeks of school. I was very happy to see that there were only a small handful of kiddos who failed one class. I've placed a challenge to them that I do not want to see ANY Band Kiddos on the failure list at the end of the second six weeks. This is not a lofty goal to attain especially with the amount of tutorial times set up by our core teachers. If the kids turn in their work, get help if needed, and work hard in class, they will pass their classes. We've talked in the past that they are capable of getting good grade, but they have to put in the effort. I have faith that they will meet that challenge and then some.

We have our first concerts of the year in a couple of weeks - 6th Grade Demonstration Concert on the 19th and our 7th and 8th Grade Fall Concert on the 24th. The 6th Grade Demonstration Concert is a sight to behold. We started this concert years ago to show off our 6th Graders and show their family and friends how far they have come since school started. It also teaches our kids how to prepare for and perform at a concert right of the bat. Please be sure to fill that gym to capacity. Your kids deserve to perform for a full house.

Our 7th and 8th Grade Bands have been working very hard putting together their performances. You are going to see them perform a really good concert on the 24th. After you watch them perform, make sure you attend the 3rd Annual GJHS Family Night. Go around and check out the work your kiddos have been doing in their other classes. I also believe that there will be some informational meetings as well. It's always a wonderful evening and a great time to see what has been happening at GJHS.

The 7th and 8th Graders have also been working hard preparing their audition pieces for the All-District Band. That audition is on November 11th. We are requiring that the 8th Grade winds and the 7th and 8th Grade Percussion Audition. We are also opening it up to our 7th Grade winds who are up to the challenge. The 8th Grade Winds and JH Percussion have their etudes ready and up to tempo. The 7th Grade winds have the slow etude rocking and have the fast etude in their hands and are now working to get it to tempo. Preparing these pieces have made them better musicians. We want them to audition because we know that they will do very well. This group is an honor band that has kids from all over the north part of our region. Those that are selected will attend a clinic/concert

on January 27th. They will work with a clinician preparing for a concert that evening. This is a great opportunity for our kids. They have worked hard preparing for the audition. They may as well go all the way and audition. It is a blind audition. The judges are behind a screen and only know the student's letter. We would love to have a whole bunch of kids not only audition, but make the band.

Let's talk about our 6th Graders. They have made some serious progress since we started putting instruments together and playing. They are a fun group. Just a couple of things. We still have a few kiddos that do not have a book. This will hold them back from practicing. If you call one of the music stores, they will be more than happy to deliver a book to school. You can either pay over the phone or order from them and have your child bring a check or cash and I can give them the payment. Also, this is for our clarinet and alto saxophone players, please make sure that your child has plenty of reeds. They wear out over time. When that happens, it becomes very difficult to get a good sound and your child will be frustrated. The recommended brands are either Mitchell Lurie or Vandoren and a size 3 will be fine. These are good quality reeds. Lesser

quality reeds will not work very well.

As I said earlier, we have our demonstration concert on the 19th. Please check out what your child has been doing. I know that you'll be pleasantly please with what you hear. All of the practicing they have been doing at home is paying off. If your child isn't playing at home, encourage them to do so. The more they practice, the better they will become. We have told them almost daily that the 45 minutes in class isn't enough. They have to do the work at home as well. I'm really excited for you to see how much better they have become. Please fill that gym for their first performance as a full band.

Well, I guess that's it for this month. I hope you have a wonderful October and I'll see you at the concerts.

Take care!

Mr. G

Dogie Band Calendar

October

- 19th - 6th Grade Band Demonstration Concert. 6pm GJHS Classic Gym
- 23rd - Staff Development Day
- 24th - 7th and 8th Grade Bands Fall Concert. 6pm GJHS Classic Gym.

November

- 6th - 27th - Scents of Soy Fundraiser. All monies and orders are due the 27th. No late orders.
- 11th - All District Band Auditions. 8th Grade Band. 7th and 8th Grade Percussion, Selected 7th Graders.
- 20th - 24th - Thanksgiving Break
- 27th - Fundraising Money and Orders are due. No late orders will be accepted.
- 28th - 8th Grade Band Christmas Concert Rehearsal. 3:30pm - 4:30pm
- 30th - 7th Grade Band Christmas Concert Rehearsal. 3:30pm - 4:30pm

December

- 5th - 6th Grade Band Christmas Concert Rehearsal. 3:30pm - 4:30pm
- 7th - 6th Grade Band Christmas Concert Rehearsal. 3:30pm - 4:30pm
- 12th - GJHS Bands Christmas Concert. 7pm GHS New Gym
- 20th - Early Release
- 21st - 29th - Christmas Break

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