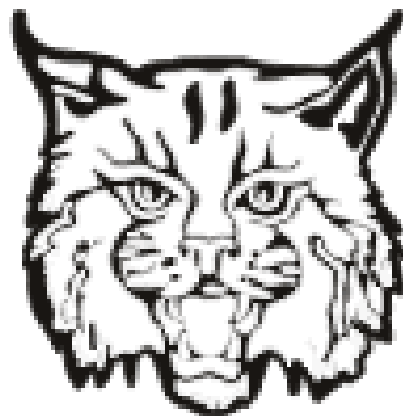


# East Windsor Middle School Band Program Student Parent Handbook



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**2007**

**2008**

# **East Windsor Middle School Music Department**

38 Main St, Broad Brook, CT 06071

860-623-4488

**Dennis Goss, Director of Instrumental Music**  
**Tracie Schutter, Director of Choral Music**

**James Slattery, Principal**  
**Kimberly Hellerich, Vice Principal**

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome back to another school year!

This copy of the Band Handbook should provide you with some helpful information about the band program. If you have a question not addressed in this publication, please feel free to call or e-mail me. The Handbook Form must be signed by returning band students and their parents by September 21 in order to complete their registration for band class this year.

Band provides our students with a tremendous opportunity for academic, social, physical, and emotional growth. While it is an excellent and worthwhile co-curricular activity, band is an academic class. It requires a commitment which involves daily practice, attending weekly lessons and rehearsals consistently, and participating in performances outside the school day. Students receive a quarterly grade. Striving for excellence is a team effort by students, teachers and parents. By signing and submitting the Handbook Participation Consent Statement, together we are all making a promise to strive for excellence.

This year, let's expect great things and great times!

Sincerely,

Dennis Goss  
Band Director  
East Windsor Middle School  
dgoss@ewindsor.k12.ct.us

# East Windsor Middle School Band Participation Consent Form

PLEASE RETURN THE FORM BELOW TO MR. GOSS BY  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

TO CONFIRM YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS HANDBOOK AND ARE AWARE OF ALL  
REQUIRED PERFORMANCE DATES.

Students entering the program for the first time this year have until  
Friday, Sept. 29 to complete and submit this form.

We have read and discussed the information in the band handbook. We understand that although music is an academic class, it is also a performance class and requires some time outside of school in order to participate. By registering for this course, we agree to conditions outlined in the class syllabus.

Parent Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

## Participation Consent Statement

I give my child permission to be excused from class to attend weekly lessons according to the published band schedule. My child agrees to complete regular class assignments and submit them in a timely fashion according to the classroom teacher's homework policies. If my child's band lesson requires an absence from the classroom during a quiz, I request that my child be given the opportunity to complete the quiz either in advance or at a later date or time as they would be permitted to if they were absent from school. I understand students are not excused from district or school-wide achievement tests.

I agree to make my child available for the following performances (CMEA performances by audition only and are not required).

Parent / Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Performance Dates 2007-2008

**CMEA Regional Festival Auditions: Saturday, November 3, East Lyme Middle School,  
(Audition only)**

**Winter Concert: Tuesday, December 11, 7:00 pm, East Windsor Middle School Gymnasium**

**Student Concert: Tuesday, December 18, 10:00 am, BBES School Gymnasium**

**Student Concert: Thursday, December 20, 2:00 pm, EWMS Auditorium**

**CMEA Regional Festival: Friday, Saturday, Feb. 29, March 1, RHAM High School  
(Audition only)**

**Pasta Dinner / Recital: Thursday, March 13, 6:00 pm, East Windsor Middle School  
(Select Ensembles)**

**Parades: Community Day, Sat., May 10, 10:00 am Memorial Day, Mon., May 26, 10:00 am  
(Wind Ensemble only)**

**Spring Concert: Wed., May 21, 7:00 pm, East Windsor Middle School Gymnasium**

**Musical Carousel Festival at Six Flags New England: Fri., May 23, 7:30 am-5:00 pm  
(Wind Ensemble and Stage Band only)**

**Student Concert: Thursday, May 29, 2:00 pm, EWMS Auditorium**

**Student Concert: Tuesday, June 3, 10:00 am, BBES Gymnasium**

# EW Middle School Band Program

## Course Syllabuses

### Concert Band

#### Student Eligibility Requirements and Grades

Open to students in grades 5-8 with at least one year of playing experience or an equivalent proficiency level as determined by the band director. First year players may be enrolled during the second half of the school year based on a proficiency evaluation given by the band director. Concert Band is a academic course for which students receive a quarterly grade based on preparation of assigned material, practical and written exams, proficiency, effort, and attendance to lessons, rehearsals and performances. (see section on Grades)

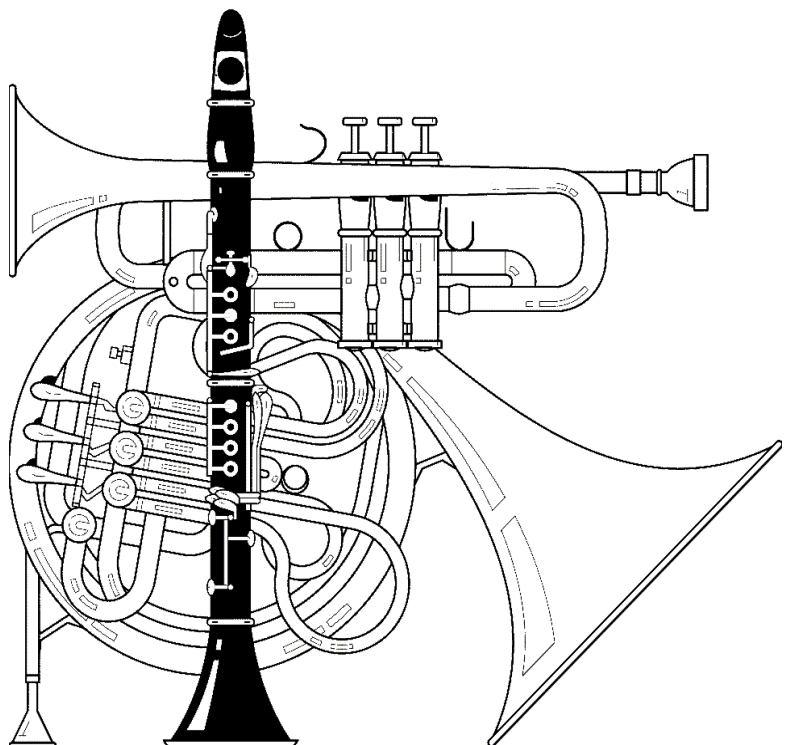
#### Course Description

The Concert Band provides a performance opportunity for grade 5-8 students at the developing skill level. Assignment to this class is based on experience, level of playing proficiency determined by an evaluation completed the previous spring, and recommendation of the director. Full band meets during X Block at the end of the day.

Music will be sequentially introduced throughout the school year that use music skills learned in the first two levels of the band method book. The difficulty of the music is determined by the membership abilities as well as the band director's perceptions of their playing ability. Emphasis is placed on reinforcement of fundamental reading skills, initial scales, development of functional range, appropriate tone production, rehearsal techniques, establishing an effective home practice routine, getting accustomed to playing with good balance, blend, and intonation in the band setting, and care and maintenance of the instrument with the intention of performing in school sponsored public performances. The goal is to show steady improvement at each rehearsal through the mastery of technique, style, and rhythm.

Students will prepare their parts at home in order to effectively contribute to the performance quality of the ensemble. As in any academic course, students may be asked to demonstrate proficiency through individual playing, in small sections, or as an ensemble at large, keeping with traditional and necessary rehearsal practices common to a performance ensemble. Music selection will challenge the student in to higher levels of difficulty that offer new music concepts.

Students enrolled in Concert Band are required to attend a weekly group lesson scheduled on a rotating and pull-out basis. Skills and concepts learned in lessons are applied to full band rehearsals. The class experience culminates in the second and fourth semesters with winter and spring concerts respectively. Attendance to performances and lessons are mandatory and comprise a portion of the student's grade.



## **Wind Ensemble**

### **Student Eligibility Requirements and Grades**

Open to students in grades 5-8 with at least two year of playing experience or an equivalent proficiency level as determined by the band director. Wind Ensemble is a academic course for which students receive a quarterly grade based on preparation of assigned material, practical and written exams, proficiency, effort, and attendance to lessons, rehearsals and performances. (see section on Grades)



### **Course Description**

The Wind Ensemble provides a performance opportunity for grade 5-8 students at the intermediate to advanced skill level. Assignment to this class is based on experience, level of playing proficiency determined by an evaluation completed the previous spring, and recommendation of the director. Full band meets during X Block at the end of the day.

Music will be sequentially introduced throughout the school year that use music skills learned in levels two and three of the band method book. The difficulty of the music is determined by the membership abilities as well as the band director's perceptions of their playing ability. Emphasis is placed on continual development of reading skills utilizing a rhythmic counting system, an advanced scale regimen, continued development of range, endurance, tone, advanced rehearsal techniques based on stronger independent playing skills, continuing to develop a more inclusive home practice routine, improving balance, blend, and intonation in the band setting, and care and maintenance of the instrument with the intention of performing in school sponsored public performances. Additional emphasis is placed on dynamics, articulations, expression and style to enhance the playing experience. The goal is to show steady improvement at each rehearsal through the mastery of technique, style, rhythm, and solo material.

In the spring, the Wind Ensemble rehearsals focus on our annual marching band commitments. Students will learn fundamental parade formation, marching technique, and outside performance strategies. Music to be performed must be memorized. Students will be issued a marching uniform consisting of pants, jersey, belt, and pendant. Students are required to provide themselves plain white sneakers. Both parades are held outside the school day. Attendance is mandatory.

## **Stage Band**

### **Student Eligibility Requirements and Grades**

Open to students in grades 5-8 with at least two year of playing experience or an equivalent proficiency level as determined by the band director. Player selection is based also on audition, director recommendation and instrumentation needs of the ensemble according to traditional orchestration of the standard and extended school stage band. With the exception of piano, students must also be enrolled in Wind Ensemble. Full band meets during X Block at the end of the day and mornings before school. Stage Band is a academic course for which students receive a quarterly grade based on preparation of assigned material, practical and written exams, proficiency, effort, and attendance to lessons, rehearsals and performances. (see section on Grades)

### Course Description

Styles of music studied in stage band are: traditional and contemporary jazz including swing, blues and various kinds of jazz, as well as rock-n-roll from its origins to popular artists, and also Latin styles. Students may learn improvisational skills associated in the various styles. A main goal of this class is to expose students to many styles and the composers and arrangers who provide the music. A historical perspective will be given on the styles the students are playing. Musical styles require various instrumental techniques and this information will be taught in this class. Full band meets during X Block at the end of the day.

Band parts are: 1st and 2nd alto sax, 1st and 2nd tenor sax, bari sax, trumpet and trombone parts divided into 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th parts; and a rhythm section consisting of electric bass, piano, trap set and percussion accessories. Veteran students of stage band are welcome to join the band each year unless they received a grade lower than a "C." When positions come available students will be informed before 2nd quarter so that the band membership can be filled. If more than one student wants a particular position, a try-out audition will be conducted. Membership is based on audition and director recommendation.

### Beginner Instrumental Music Lessons

#### Student Eligibility Requirements

Open to students in grades 5-8 who wish to learn to play a band instrument for the first time. Beginner Instrumental Music Lessons is an academic course for which students receive a quarterly grade based on preparation of assigned material, practical and written exams, proficiency, effort, and attendance to lessons, rehearsals and performances (if applicable). (see section on Grades)



### Course Description

Students will learn the fundamentals of playing a band instrument (wind, brass or percussion) including, assembly and maintenance, tone production, proper articulation and technique, and music reading. Students are scheduled for group lessons at first to acquaint them with the fundamentals of playing. In the second half of the year, may advance into the Concert Band if a required level of proficiency is reached by the student. This rehearsal will meet during X Block at the end of the day in the middle school.

#### Player Preparation and Practice

Students will prepare their parts at home in order to effectively contribute to the performance quality of the ensemble. As in any academic course, students may be asked to demonstrate proficiency through individual playing, in small sections, or as an ensemble at large, keeping with traditional and necessary rehearsal practices common to a performance ensemble. Music selection will challenge the student into higher levels of difficulty that offer new music concepts.

All instruments require fine muscle control over hundreds of muscles just to produce a basic sound. Musicians must work out those muscles the same way an athlete who wants to perform well does. This requires routine practice of specific exercises over a period of days/weeks to develop the muscle memory and strength required to perform more advanced techniques. Once the muscles are developing the performer will be able to play more difficult music with ease.

Some tips for quality practice:

Choose a quiet place to practice

2. Take some short breaks during the practice session
3. Listen to recordings of your instrument to help with the concept of how you should sound
4. Warm-up at the beginning of the session and warm-down at the end
5. At the end of the practice time, play a favorite piece for parents or friends
6. Take some time to create and improvise your own music
7. Play music that you don't already know how to play
8. Work on small sections of a piece or exercise, not the whole thing all at once.

Learning to play an instrument correctly allows you to perform any kind of music you might be interested in.

Pattern your practice routine after your lesson at school: warm-up, scales, lesson material, band music, sight-reading.

### Lessons

Students enrolled in Band are required to attend a weekly group lesson scheduled on a rotating and pull-out basis. Skills and concepts learned in lessons are applied to full band rehearsals. The class experience culminates in the second and fourth semesters with winter and spring concerts respectively. Attendance to performances and lessons are mandatory and comprise a portion of the student's grade.

### Instruments and Supplies

Students are responsible to provide their own instrument, lesson book and maintenance supplies. It is also the responsibility of students and parents to keep the instrument in good working order. Any necessary repairs must be completed in a timely fashion either through the services of the vendor operating on the school's behalf or a repair service of the parent's choice. (see Repair Services)

Students will be issued a folder for band music, lesson schedule, lesson book, pencil, and additional handouts. The folder may be collected at anytime throughout the year for periodic inspection. Please have name, instrument and class on your folder so it can be collected and returned.

### Grades and Progress Reports

Just as in any academic class, a grade needs to be an accurate reflection of a student's work and progress. When students prepare assignments well and participate cooperatively and productively, they will be successful and their grade will reflect that. Progress reports are issued periodically to maintain a high degree of communication between the director and parents. If a student or parent ever has a concern or question about a grade, do not hesitate to contact the band director. The school is eager to work with students and parents to ensure the success of every student in the program.

Band students receive a quarterly grade on their report based on the following criteria:

A.) Attend all rehearsals, lessons and performances. While the schedule and performance calendar is published, distributed to parents and students, and posted conspicuously throughout the rehearsal area, students are responsible to follow the schedule and report at the necessary times. Unexcused absences will result in a loss of credit in this area. Absence from school is considered an excused absence. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the band director in advance if possible of any extenuating circumstances which may result in an absence. Students are not excused from lessons or rehearsals to



make up work in other classes. It is the responsibility of the student to meet with their classroom teachers to arrange class projects, presentations, group assignments, etc., in order to attend lessons. The student may arrange with their classroom teachers the opportunity to make up quizzes and tests as they would if they were absent from school. Students are excused from lessons ONLY for the following reasons:

District or school-wide achievement tests

Science labs which cannot be recreated for the individual student.

Lessons which are pre-empted due to school-wide events, field trips, or other changes in the school schedule outside the control of the student are considered exempt from loss of credit.

**B.) Performances and Concerts.** Attendance at the two major seasonal concerts (winter and spring), and two district performances during the school day is a component to a student's band grade. Families are asked to carefully check their calendars and plan accordingly for these dates. Performances will be treated as final exams. A missed performance will be a drop in a letter grade. Unlike exams in other academic classes, performances cannot be made up. Wind Ensemble membership also requires participation in marching band.

### Performance Dates 2007-2008

**CMEA Regional Festival Auditions: Saturday, November 3, East Lyme Middle School,  
Winter Concert: Tuesday, December 11, 7:00 pm, East Windsor Middle School Gymnasium  
Student Concert: Tuesday, December 18, 10:00 am, BBES School Gymnasium  
Student Concert: Thursday, December 20, 2:00 pm, EWMS Auditorium  
CMEA Regional Festival: Friday, Saturday, Feb. 29, March 1, RHAM High School  
Pasta Dinner / Recital: Thursday, March 13, 6:00 pm, East Windsor Middle School  
Parades: Community Day, Sat., May 10, 10:00 am Memorial Day, Mon., May 26, 10:00 am  
Spring Concert: Wed., May 21, 7:00 pm, East Windsor Middle School Gymnasium  
Musical Carousel Festival at Six Flags New England: Fri., May 23, 7:30 am-5:00 pm  
Student Concert: Thursday, May 29, 2:00 pm, EWMS Auditorium  
Student Concert: Tuesday, June 3, 10:00 am, BBES Gymnasium**

**C.) Maintain a regular practice routine at home.** Students are required to practice a minimum of 15 to 20 minutes of practice each day, at least 5 days per week. Students who study their instrument with a private instructor outside of the school are subject to extra credit. A signed letter from the instructor is required once each marking period attesting to the number of lessons taken during that academic period.

**D.) Be prepared for class.** This consists of practicing band music at home, having all necessary equipment (instrument, music, sticks, reeds, neck straps etc.) at every rehearsal, and being ready to play when the director begins the rehearsal. If a student does not have their instrument or music folder / lesson book for class, they will lose full or partial credit for that day.

Students are not permitted to use someone else's instrument. This does not support good hygiene and general health practices. If the student's instrument is in the shop or they have a physical impairment that does not allow them to play; the student will not lose credit. Students with health reasons for not participating in class must have a signed note from their parents to avoid loss of credit. The instructor may find alternative things for them to do such as being a class helper or following along with the music as the band practices. It will also be within the band director's discretion to send the student back to class in the case of lessons.



E.) Testing. Students will periodically take playing quizzes to prove accuracy of knowledge and playing ability of music fundamentals in the method book, and music to be perfected in band. Written quizzes will be administered when necessary to prove knowledge on written music terms and symbols.

F.) The student participates to the best of their ability in class activities.

G.) Work cooperatively with classmates and offer assistance to help make the band work as a team. For instance: helping each other with equipment, folders, and instruments.

H.) Follow posted classroom rules and avoid disrupting the class in learning activities. Not following class rules and being disruptive will result in a loss of credit in this category and detentions will be given at the discretion of the instructor.

I.) The student has respect for classmates, the teacher, and the equipment used by choir and band. Students should plan to attend instrumental lessons and band for one reason; to participate in a worthwhile educational experience, join their classmates in an enjoyable musical performance setting, and learn a healthy way of self-expression. Chronic misbehavior may be grounds for being removed from band.

J.) Model mature musicianship. Exhibit good playing posture, correct instrument position, produce the best sound, and always listens.

K.) Maintain your instrument in good working order. Students are obligated to inform the band director when the instrument has been submitted for repairs. A maximum of 2 weeks is allowed for completion of repairs before loss of class credit occurs. School owned instruments are the responsibility of the school except for abuse to the instrument caused by the student.

### Chair Assignment

In order to promote a quality musical experience for our students and to encourage excellence, growth and a high degree of effort and participation, students are given a chair assignment based on playing proficiency as determined from an evaluation by the band director. Students who wish to change their chair assignment may initiate a challenge to the player ranked one chair above them. A student may register a challenge no more than once a semester. Both students will be given at least 2 weeks notice prior to the challenge. The challenger must perform the required playing during the full band rehearsal. The student being challenged may choose to test during the weekly lesson or opt to relinquish his seat. The challenge material will be selected by the director which may include band literature, lesson material, scales and sight-reading selections.

### Performance Requirements

The nature of the musical performance class is to prepare for and participate in regularly scheduled public concerts as outlined in the event calendar. Students are required to prepare their band literature in order to productively contribute to the success of the ensemble. Performance dates are included in this handbook, published in the school newsletter, posted throughout the band area, and distributed to students in class in the form of handouts. Although music is an academic class, it is also a performance



class and requires some time outside of school in order to participate. By registering for the class, students and parents consent to attend the winter and spring concerts.

Our performances serve several purposes:

1. They act as a benchmark for our progress and allow us to set new goals.
2. They entertain an audience.
3. They expand the repertoire of the performers and audience.
4. They teach the performers and audience members the appropriate etiquette for the situation.

A successful performance is the result of a great team effort. The performers and the audience leave feeling excited about the experience and ready to start new music.

### Concert Dress

Formal concerts require formal dress. The dress code for our formal performances will always be:

(Concert Band, Wind Ensemble and Stage Band only)

Men; Black shoes, Black socks, Black slacks, white button down shirt.

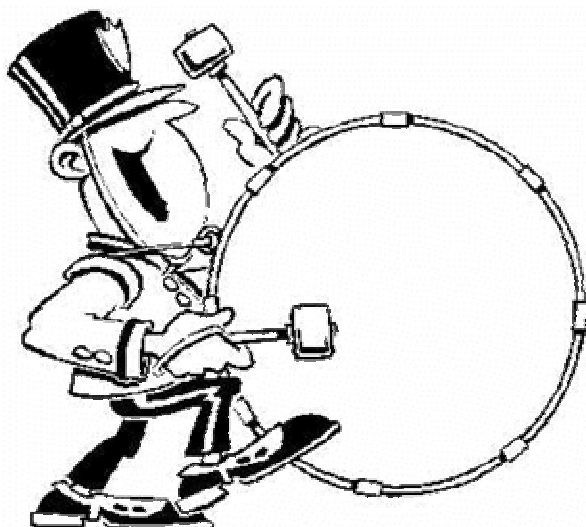
Women; same as men or; Black dress (no strapless or spaghetti straps), Black Skirt/White Blouse. Skirts must be below the knee when sitting and all blouses must have some sleeve. Footwear must be appropriate to the dress.

We sometimes do performances that are not formal in nature. At those performances the standard school dress code will apply. Students who do not meet these requirements may be asked to change or leave the performance. If you have any difficulty meeting these requirements please contact Mr. Goss.



### Adjudication Festivals, Special Performances

In the past, the East Windsor Middle School Band has participated in performances outside of the above mentioned calendar. These performances may include music festivals and district concerts. The decision to attend a festival is made at the discretion of the band director based on ensemble readiness and proficiency. Festival sites may be out-of-state and involve a time commitment past the regular school day. Students would be responsible to pay for the cost which may include transportation, fees and meals. District concerts have included taking players from the middle school to the elementary school during the school day. Students are selected by the band director to participate in these additional performances based on player proficiency and instrumentation needs of the ensemble. Parents and students will be notified when the decision to schedule additional performances is made.



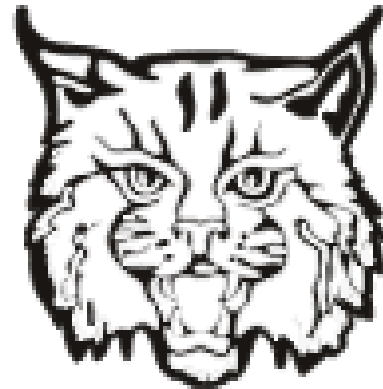
### Repair Services

Several music vendors in the area provide repair services. Always ask the vendor if their repair technicians are professionally trained and licensed. While your instrument is still under the terms of your rental agreement, use the repair services of that vendor. If the instrument is paid for and privately owned, you may choose any vendor you wish. As a courtesy, the band director will hold your child's instrument for pick up at the school by the vendor of your choice. When a student suspects a problem with the

instrument, bring it immediately to the school band director. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO AFFECT REPAIRS YOURSELF. The band director will inspect the instrument and issue the student an INSTRUMENT INSPECTION FORM to take home to parents. It will contain the results of the inspection and recommendations by the director. If parents wish to avail themselves of the music vendor working on behalf of the school (Music and Arts), complete the form which gives the director permission to submit the instrument for repairs. Upon completion of any necessary repairs and delivery of the instrument to the school, payment must be made prior to the student receiving the instrument. **It is the parent's responsibility to contact Music and Arts (1-860-870-7557) or the vendor of your choice to arrange for pick up the instrument at the school.** Students are obligated to inform the band director when the instrument has been submitted for repairs. A maximum of 2 weeks is allowed for completion of repairs before loss of class credit occurs.

### Contact Information:

**Dennis Goss  
Director of Instrumental Music  
East Windsor Middle School  
38 Main St.  
Broad Brook, CT  
860-623-4488  
E-Mail: [dgoss@ewindsor.k12.ct.us](mailto:dgoss@ewindsor.k12.ct.us)  
Voice Mail: 860-623-6071, ext. 1360**



**East Windsor  
Middle School  
Wildcat Band**