**MS CONCERT BAND SCALE CURRICULUM**

Scales are among the most important fundamental building blocks in music study. Composers use them frequently in pieces, so you’ll often run across them in band music. Proficient performance of scales will speed up learning time and increase overall musicianship.

In MS Concert Band, you’ll be studying all 12 major scales. We travel around the circle of fifths (we actually go backwards, using the circle of fourths due to the “flat” scales being more band-friendly upon starting our study), testing on each scale before learning the next. By the end of the year, you will be able to play the entire circle in order without stopping. By the end of 8th grade, you’ll be able to do this memorized!

The curriculum schedule will be as follows:

**Wednesdays**  – introduce a new scale during band class time.

**Thursdays** – during band class time, review/reinforce the scale learned on Wednesday.

**Fridays** – during band class time, review/reinforce the scale learned on Wednesday.

**Mondays** – test on the scale, using a scale sheet if desired, individually in front of the class.

**Tuesdays** – review and reinforce old scales, adding onto the circle each week.

Because woodwind instruments have more difficult finger patterns, they will begin earlier than the other instruments, starting the study of the new scale on Monday and Tuesday during lesson time on their respective lesson days before the new scale is introduced in full band on Wednesday. Lesson time throughout the week will always start making sure that the section is comfortable with the new scale (questions are welcomed and help is given) before moving onto concert band literature.

**The Tests**

Scale tests make up 25% of the total grade for the trimester as this skill is critical to the overall progress of a band student. Each time a student performs a test, I rate it using a scale of 0-5 points.

**5 points** Flawless! Perfect tone, every pitch is accurate, chosen tempo remains steady, scale is played

expressively

**4.5 points** One minor mistake: (restart, repeating a note or poor tone due to not using enough air the

first time, inconsistent tempo, a “squeak” or other “blip”)

**4 points** One major mistake: (incorrect note, incorrect partial, incorrect fingering, pausing)

**3.5 points** Two minor mistakes

**3 points** Two major mistakes

**2.5 points** Two major mistakes and one or two minor mistakes

**2 points** Having all the correct fingerings/slide positions, but the scale is unrecognizable due to poor air

Usage and embouchure formation.

**1.5 points** Several major and minor mistakes, difficult to recognize the correct major scale melody

**1 point** Completely unrecognizable, but the attempt to play in front of the class was made

**0 points** Refusing to play in front of the class, or talking during other student tests.

When the tests are placed into the grade book, I multiply your score by 4. This is weighted to underline the importance of learning scales.

**5 =20**

**4.5 =18**

**4 =16**

**3.5 =14**

**3 =12**

**2.5 =10**

**2 =8**

**1.5 =6**

**1 =4**

**0 =0**

Students are expected to prepare their scales for the Monday that they will be tested. Students who procrastinate and wait to practice until the last minute have historically made several mistakes that I can instantly tell is due to lack of preparation. I understand, and have been trained to hear the difference between a mistake that is made because a student is nervous and a mistake that occurs due to lack of preparation. If students are unhappy with the score that they have received, they may retake it (must be done during class in front of classmates—the performance aspect is critical), but take the average of the original score and the new score for the student’s final score. This is done to discourage procrastination as you’ll never get a perfect score (make up all the points) if you didn’t take time to prepare the scale for the original test. That being said, I encourage students to retake scales to prove mastery of the skill, as the point of studying and testing on scales is not the grade they receive, but the successful performance of a scale to prepare them for difficult music in the future and improve overall technical coordination.

**NERVES**

Often times students and parents warn me that they get extremely anxious when having to perform a task in front of other people. (Why can’t we just test individually in your office, etc.?) Band, by nature, is a public performance situation. Playing individually in front of the class prepares students for solo work in the future, and makes playing in the full ensemble extremely comfortable (eliminate nerves for group performance altogether). It also prepares students for public speaking in the future, as they’ll be accustomed to how their bodies react in stressful situations.

Everyone, even seasoned professionals, gets a bit nervous for performances. **The best way to work through those nerves is to be over-prepared.** Practice at home in front of parents or siblings to get used to playing in front of people. Knowing that you’ve practiced a lot will give you the confidence you need to give a wonderful performance.

Some students say, “I can play in front of you privately, but in front of my peers I get so scared that I freeze up.” This is a valid and common concern. However, the more you do it, the less scary it becomes. I’ve had many students in the past go from being very upset during a test to whizzing through it confidently by two months into our testing calendar. The key is to practice so much ahead of time that you know you’ll do well! If a student has put enough time into the preparation, the usual culprit is poor tone and perhaps a missed partial or two. When playing your test, take a nice deep breath before you start and GO SLOWLY! ☺ Keep in mind that though you think everyone will be intently listening to you, they aren’t. They are too busy worrying about when it is their turn. Remember, we are all in this together. We all support each other. No one will judge you for making a mistake, because somewhere along the line we will all make mistakes! We cheer each other on when progress is made and get excited when whole-band improvement can be heard.

Here is our learning order. Find your instrument and follow that column (concert pitches are on the far left):

**Flute/Perc/L Brass Trumpet/Clarinet/TSax A/B Sax Horn**

**C Concert** C Major D Major A Major GMajor

**F Concert** F Major G Major D Major C Major

**Bb Concert** Bb Major C Major G Major F Major

**Eb Concert** Eb Major F Major C Major Bb Major

**Ab Concert** Ab Major Bb Major F Major Eb Major

**Db Concert** Db Major Eb Major Bb Major Ab Major

**Gb/F# Concert** Gb Major Ab Major Eb Major Db Major

**B Concert** B Major Db Major Ab Major Gb Major

**E Concert** E Major Gb Major Db Major B Major

**A Concert** A Major B Major Gb Major E Major

**D Concert** D Major E Major B Major A Major

**G Concert** G Major A Major E Major D Major

Refer to your scale reference sheets for your key signatures and note orders. Always make sure that you can spell your scale. Go through the “say it, play it”, then “think it, play it” system, (refer to scale curriculum sheets if you forgot) and insist on having the correct fingers down \*before\* you play it with air.

Your reference sheet included lists a variety of methods to help you learn these scales without my assistance. I will, of course, help you in class. These extra pages are reminders if you’ve forgotten. Refer to them as often as necessary.

Remember, all of this study is not meant to torture you! ☺ Scales are important building blocks, necessary to free up your brain to think of creative and not mechanical things as you create a work of art.

Happy Practicing!

**EUPH/TUBA – Major Scales (in circle order)** play the 1st written as the required test, the 2nd is extra credit (play low-high)

**C Major**  C D E F G A B C

\*(low) 13,4 12 2 0 12 2 12 1

(very high) 1 0 2 0 12 2 12 1

**F Major**  F G A Bb C D E F

\*(high) 0 12 2 0 1 0 2 0

(low) 13,4 12 2 0 13,4 12 2 0

**Bb Major** BbC D Eb F G A Bb

\*(low) 0 13, 4 12 1 0 12 2 0

(high) 0 1 0 1 0 12 2 0

**Eb Major** Eb F G Ab Bb C D Eb

\*(high) 1 0 12 1 0 1 0 1

**Ab Major** Ab Bb C Db Eb F G Ab

\*(low) 1 0 13,4 23 1 0 12 1

(high) 1 0 1 2 1 0 12 1

**Db Major** Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C Db

\*(high) 23 1 0 23 1 0 1 2

**Gb Major** Gb Ab Bb Cb Db Eb F Gb

\*(low) 23 1 0 123,24 23 1 0 23

(high) 23 1 0 12 2 1 0 23

**B Major** B C# D# E F# G# A# B

\*(low/med) 123,24 23 1 2 23 1 0 12

**E Major**  E F# G# A B C# D# E

(very low) 123,24 23 1 2 123,24 23 1 2

\*(high) 2 23 1 2 12 2 1 2

**A Major** A B C# D# E F# G# A

\*(low) 2 123,24 23 12 2 23 1 2

(high) 2 12 2 0 2 23 1 2

**D Major** D E F# G A B C# D

\*(high) 12 2 23 12 2 12 2 0

**G Major** G A B C D E F# G

(low) 12 2 123,24 13,4 12 2 23 12

\*(high) 12 2 12 1 0 2 23 12

**TRUMPET – Major Scales (in circle order)** play the 1st one written as your required test, the 2nd is extra credit (play low-high)

**D Major** D E F# G A B C# D

(low) 13 12 2 0 12 2 12 1

(very high) 1 0 2 0 12 2 12 1

**G Major** G A B C D E F# G

(high) 0 12 2 0 1 0 2 0

(low) 13 12 2 0 13(so) 12 2 0

**C Major**  C D E F G A B C

(low) 0 13(so) 12 1 0 12 2 0

(high) 0 1 0 1 0 12 2 0

**F Major** F G A Bb C D E F

(high) 1 0 12 1 0 1 0 1

**Bb Major** Bb C D Eb F G A Bb

(low) 1 0 13 23 1 0 12 1

(high) 1 0 1 2 1 0 12 1

**Eb Major** Eb F G Ab Bb C D Eb

(high) 23 1 0 23 1 0 1 2

**Ab Major** Ab Bb C Db Eb F G Ab

(low) 23 1 0 123(so) 23 1 0 23

(high) 23 1 0 12 2 1 0 23

**Db Major** Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C Db

(low/med) 123(so) 23 1 2 23 1 0 12

**Gb Major** Gb Ab Bb Cb Db Eb F Gb

(very low) 123 23 1 2 123(so) 23 1 2

(high) 2 23 1 2 12 2 1 2

**B Major** B C# D# E F# G# A# B

(low) 2 123(so) 23 12 2 23 1 2

(high) 2 12 2 0 2 23 1 2

**E Major** E F# G# A B C# D# E

(high) 12 2 23 12 2 12 2 0

**A Major** A B C# D E F# G# A

(low) 12 2 123(so) 13(so) 12 2 23 12

(high) 12 2 12 1 0 2 23 12

**TROMBONE – Major Scales (in circle order)** play the 1st written as the required test, the 2nd is extra credit (play low-high)

**C Major**  C D E F G A B C

\*(low) 6 4 2 1 4 2 4 3

**F Major** F G A Bb C D E F

(low) 6 4 2 1 6 4 2 1

\*(high) 1 4 2 1 3 1 2 1

**Bb Major** Bb C D Eb F G A Bb

\*(low) 1 6 4 3 1 4 2 1

(high) 1 3 1 3 1 -2 2 1

**Eb Major** Eb F G Ab Bb C D Eb

\*(high) 3 1 4 3 1 3 1 3

**Ab Major** Ab Bb C Db Eb F G Ab

\*(low) 3 1 6 5 3 1 4 3

(high) 3 1 3 2 3 1 -2 3

**Db Major** Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C Db

\*(low/med) 5 3 1 5 3 1 3 2

**Gb Major** Gb Ab Bb Cb Db Eb F Gb

(very low) 5 3 1 7 5 3 1 5

\*(high) 5 3 1 4 2 3 1 -3

**B Major** B C# D# E F# G# A# B

\*(low) 7 5 3 2 5 3 1 4

**E Major** E F# G# A B C# D# E

(low) 7 5 3 2 7 5 3 2

\*(high) 2 5 3 2 4 2 3 2

**A Major** A B C# D E F# G# A

\*(low) 2 7 5 4 2 5 3 2

(high) 2 4 2 1 2 -3 3 2

**D Major** D E F# G A B C# D

\*(low) 4 2 5 4 2 4 2 1

**G Major** G A B C D E F# G

\*(low) 4 2 7 6 4 2 5 4

(high) 4 2 4 3 1 2 -3 -2

**HORN – Major Scales (in circle order)** play the \* as your required test, others are extra credit

**G Major** G A B C D E F# G

\*(high) 0 T12 T2 T0 T3 (12) T2 T2 T0

(low) 13 12 2 0 12 0 2 0

**C Major**  C D E F G A B C

(very low) 0 13 12 1 0 12 2 0

\*(low) 0 1 0 1 0 T12 T2 T0

(very high) T0 T3 T2 T0 T0 T12 T2 T0

**F Major** F G A Bb C D E F

(low) 1 0 12 1 0 1 0 1

\*(high) 1 0 T12 T1 T0 T3 T2 T0

**Bb Major** Bb C D Eb F G A Bb

\*(low) 1 0 1 2 1 0 T12 T1

(high) T1 T0 T3 T1 T0 T0 T12 T1

**Eb Major** Eb F G Ab Bb C D Eb

(low) 23 1 0 23 1 0 1 2

\*(high) 2 1 0 T23 T1 T0 T3 T1

**Ab Major** Ab Bb C Db Eb F G Ab

(low) 23 1 0 12 2 1 0 T23

\*(high) T23 T1 T0 T23 T1 T0 T0 T23

**Db Major** Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C Db

(very low) 123 23 1 2 23 1 0 12

\*(low) 12 2 1 2 T23 T1 T0 T23

**Gb Major** Gb Ab Bb Cb Db Eb F Gb

\*(low) 2 23 1 2 12 2 1 2

(high) 2 T23 T1 T2 T23 T1 T0 T2

**B Major** B C# D# E F# G# A# B

\*(low) 2 12 2 0 2 T23 T1 T2

(very high) T2 T23 T1 T2 T2 T23 T12 T2

**E Major** E F# G# A B C# D# E

(low) 12 2 23 12 2 12 2 0

\*(high) 0 2 T23 T12 T2 T23 T1 T2

**A Major** A B C# D E F# G# A

(low) 12 2 12 1 0 2 T23 T12

\*(high) T12 T2 T23 T3 T2 T2 T23 T12

**D Major** D E F# G A B C# D

(very low) 13 12 2 0 12 2 12 1

\*(high) 1 0 2 0 T12 T2 T23 T3