



**Dr. Edgar E. Malker
Principal**

**Montgomery
Village Middle
School**

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**Thomas P. Goba
Music Teacher**

Phone: 301-840-4660
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August 31, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Tom Goba and I am starting my twentieth year teaching music and my fifth year here at Montgomery Village Middle School. You are getting this letter because your child has chosen to join the Montgomery Village Middle School band, chorus or orchestra, which meets every day for forty-five minutes throughout the entire year. There will be one chorus with all three grade levels and two bands/orchestra classes this year. We have a combined 6th grade band/orchestra class along with a combined 7th and 8th grade band/orchestra class. Each ensemble will learn music from a wide variety of genres (styles) ranging from Renaissance to 21st Century music. Students will have the opportunity to play, sing, compose and perform music alone and in an ensemble composed of their peers. Strong emphasis will be placed on each individual mastering basic skills and attaining excellence through small group performance.

There are no fees for music classes. All students who play the clarinet, oboe, bassoon or saxophone will be expected to purchase their own reeds from a music store. Students typically rent or purchase their own instrument from nearby music stores (I have their flyers). If either of these is not possible, please contact me immediately.

The goal of the music program is to develop skilled musicians who can perform at a high level, both alone and with others. In order for each student to reach this goal, **each student is expected to practice their assignments for a minimum of one half hour per day, five days a week and note this time on their practice chart which should be signed weekly by a parent.** This will ensure that all students improve and develop their full potential as well as gain a better understanding and appreciation of music while learning what it takes to become an effective member of an ensemble. Students will also increase their self-esteem through their own success and cultivate a strong sense of discipline and confidence.

There will be at least **two major performances** during school this year. These will be at **7 pm in our gym on December 16th and May 20th**. Please put these two dates on your calendar now. Students are highly encouraged to wear concert attire at each performance which includes a white polo type shirt with black pants and black shoes/socks. Attendance is mandatory for every performance and it counts for 20% of the final grade for that term. You will be notified when and if other performances are scheduled during the school year. Students are expected to come to class on time and be prepared with their instrument, music, method book, folder & pencil and give their best effort every day.

Grading Policy: Students will be graded on an individual point system based on a fixed set of criteria and standards which incorporates the successful completion of specified skills, assignments and performances. Work not completed or attempted will be recorded as a Z and will be calculated as zero.

Category	Percentage of Total Grade
Homework for Practice & Preparation	5%
Formative Assessments	75%
Summative Assessments	20%

MVMS uses the "raw score conversion to percentage" method to calculate grades. Therefore, the # of points a particular assignment is worth does not impact its weight within a category (18/20 carries the same weight as 36/40). However, assignments may be still be weighted within categories by assigning assignment weights. The Homework category will be used for short or quick assignments such as warm-ups that typically check for student understanding.

GRADE UPDATES:

Grades entered in a teacher’s electronic gradebook are automatically uploaded to Edline on a nightly basis. Both students and parents should log into Edline regularly to check grades and missing assignments. Students are expected to know their grades, and what, if any, work is missing at all times. There should be no surprises about grades to students or parents; if so, please make sure you contact me. If you need an Edline activation code, please contact our school's Edline Superuser, Alice Marable at alice_marable@mcpsmd.org. In addition, it would be extremely helpful to enter an active email address in both student and parent Edline accounts; I use this to provide class updates as well as other communication throughout the year.

COMMUNICATION:

One of the most useful ways we have to communicate is your child's data notebook. Please check this daily for information. I can also be reached by email (fastest) or by calling the school (301-840-4660). In addition, please check Edline regularly to know if you are missing work.

Grading Scale:

90-100 = A 80-89 = B 70-79 = C 60-69 = D 59 & below = E

Missing Work: Students are responsible for making up missed work, and should see Mr. Goba immediately upon return to get missed assignments.

Late Work: All assignments are due on the date given; however, late assignments will be accepted up to one week after the due date and will lose one letter grade for being late. Missed concerts require a make-up assignment due one week after the concert date and will also count for 20% of the term grade.

I look forward to working with your children and sharing with them the wonderful and amazing world of music. If you ever have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email me.

Sincerely,

Teacher: Thomas P. Goba

Content Specialist

Content Administrator

Principal