

NSHS Band Handbook Contents

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Mission

The Instrumental Music Program at North Scott High School serves many purposes. First and foremost, it is structured in a manner that will provide and facilitate a well-rounded learning environment for students that generates a genuine understanding and appreciation for music and the fine arts. Through this approach, students are exposed to many learning concepts in the classroom, and then are given the opportunity to apply those concepts through performance.

Expectations

Students enrolled in the Band Program are expected to

- 1) Prepare for and attend all rehearsals and required performances on time
- 2) Prepare for and attend 5 lessons per quarter (nine weeks)
- 3) Complete 1 or 2 computer assignments per quarter, as assigned.
- 4) Contribute to the success of the program by demonstrating the proper work ethic and behavior in all rehearsals and performances
- 5) Represent themselves and the school appropriately during all trips and traveling performances
- 6) Have fun learning music!!

Band Grading Policies / Procedures

Band grades are determined by averaging the BEHAVIOR / PARTICIPATION grade and the LESSON / COMPUTER ASSIGNMENTS grade.

- 1) Behavior/Participation- This grade is determined by attendance, preparation, and attitude / behavior in rehearsals and performances. If a student demonstrates negative behavior or simply does not contribute, their grade will be lowered accordingly.
- 2) Lessons / Computer Assignments- This grade is divided into seven parts, consisting of the 5 required lessons and two Music Theory computer assignments.

Lessons:

Lessons come out of other regular classes. Students sign up for lessons on the lesson schedule one week in advance of the lesson, after checking with the classroom teacher regarding tests or any other potential conflict. We will then send the schedule for the week to teachers on each Monday morning. Students are responsible for 5 lessons during each quarter, one of which may be an approved concert attendance verified with a program, a detailed description and evaluation of the concert, and ticket stub. Only 1 lesson per week will be allowed. Only 2 lessons per quarter out of the same class will be allowed. Each lesson is graded individually based on preparation and demonstration of the concepts presented. While 5 are required, every student is encouraged to do more, as this is where the real learning of the instrument takes place. If a student chooses to attend more than 5, the top 5 grades will be recorded. Among these 5 lessons, the students are required to attend a "Scale / Arpeggio Evaluation Lesson". For this lesson, the students will prepare a group of scales and arpeggios and perform them from memory. This lesson grade will be weighed more heavily than the others and will definitely be counted as one of the five required (even if it does not fall in the "top five lesson grades" for that student during that particular quarter.)

Students Studying Privately (Highly Recommended)- Students who study with a private instructor will need to attend 3 in-school lessons (with Mr. K. or Mr. McMann) and turn in a Lesson Voucher (found on band webpage) for the remaining 2. The private instructor is to fill each out and assign a grade. The student will then turn it in to Mr. Kessinger or Mr. McMann by the end of the quarter.

Computer Assignments:

These Music Theory Programs help the students gain a deeper understanding of music and its characteristics. Each student is taken through a series of lessons, and then given a review quiz over the covered topics. The score of the review is recorded and entered into the gradebook. As previously mentioned, the computer scores count twice, since some students will be covering two units in one quarter. Those that are assigned only one will have that grade entered twice. If a student is not satisfied with his/her score(s), they can redo the computer assignments as many times as they wish **during that particular quarter**. When the quarter ends, the grade is recorded.

PROGRESS REPORTS: These reports are sent out as an indicator of the students' progress, AND can also be a reminder that the student is headed for a less than stellar grade. This is the procedure used to figure these grades:

Reminder: The final quarter grade is based on 5 lessons plus the required computer assignments.

Jazz Band Grading Policies / Procedures

- 1) Participation- This grade is determined by attendance, preparation, and attitude / behavior in rehearsals and performances.
- 2) Artist / Theory Quizzes- Each quarter, jazz students will be quizzed on the jazz artist packets in their binders. Basic Jazz Theory may appear on these quizzes as well, covering concepts discussed in rehearsals.
- 3) Opinion Paper- During the second semester, students will be asked to write an opinion paper on a jazz-related article (given to them), including intro, article summary, agreements / disagreements and support for the argument, and conclusion. This will be averaged with the quiz grade for that quarter.

Audition Procedures / Challenges

Symphonic / Concert Band

AUDITIONS for chair placement will be held during the last part of marching band season. Audition material will be given out in lessons. Audition material will consist of the following:

- 1) Watkins-Farnum Standardized Music Test (Sight-reading)
- 2) ALL major scales - C,F,Bb,Eb,Ab,Db, Gb(F#), B,E,A,D,G, and chromatic over full playing range. 2 1/2 points will be awarded for each correct, complete octave.
- 3) Prepared piece(s) selected by directors.

CHALLENGES may be made with the person in the chair immediately above. The challenge is made first by informing the person to be challenged, then by informing one of the directors. The challenger is to select a piece of music from his folder, the person challenged is to select a piece from his folder, and each is to give a copy of their piece to the other **THE NEXT DAY** after the challenge is made. Each student will then have three school days (after exchange of music) to prepare **BOTH** pieces of music. On the fourth school day after music is exchanged, both players must play for the directors. All challenges will include scales. Any student refusing to accept a challenge or not abiding by the challenge rules will automatically forfeit their chair position.

The only exception is if a student is ill on the day of the challenge. A challenger losing a challenge may re-challenge, but must wait at least one week. Challenges may also occur between Concert and Symphonic Bands and Jazz I and Jazz II. The directors have the option of selecting another piece of music of their choosing, if they so desire. While a challenge *may* occur during the time immediately prior to a performance, a change of seating will not occur within two weeks before a performance.

Jazz Bands

AUDITIONS for one of the two jazz bands take place in the Spring, usually early May. Standard instrumentation includes Alto, Tenor, and Baritone Saxophones, Trombones, Trumpets, Piano, Bass, Drum Set, and Guitar. Clarinet, Flute, and Double Reed Players are encouraged to try out on sax if interested. We have many Flute and Clarinet players currently performing in our jazz bands. Euphonium players are also encouraged, as the school owns a couple of valve trombones that translate nicely into a jazz band setting. The auditions consist of the following:

EVERYONE BUT DRUMMERS SHOULD PREPARE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) The C, F, Bb, Eb, G, D, and A major scales from **MEMORY**. You will get extra points for multiple octaves.
- 2) The mixolydian and dorian scales on attached sheet (sheet may be used in audition)
- 3) Two prepared pieces- Swing and Latin
- 4) **OPTIONAL** (but recommended)- Perform a 12 bar improvised solo over concert Bb or F Blues changes with a pre-recorded rhythm section.

DRUMMERS:

- 1) Perform these drum styles:
 - Up-tempo Swing, q= 180
 - Bossa Nova, q= 120
 - Samba, q= 104
 - Funk Groove, q=96
- 2) Two prepared pieces, Swing and Latin
- 3) Play swing feel with soloist, interacting.

CHALLENGES in jazz band use the same rules as for Symphonic / Concert Band. Each will pick a piece of music, prepare both, and perform the same scales used in the auditions.

Jazz Combos

Auditions for these small jazz ensembles take place in early/mid September, and are open to any student

enrolled in Jazz Band. For these auditions, the student is asked to:

- 1) Pick a blues melody from the jazz binder and learn it. In the audition, the student will perform it with a pre-recorded rhythm section, playing the melody and improvising for at least two choruses.
- 2) Pick a tune of their choice, playing the melody and improvising over the chord changes

Attendance Policies

Performances:

Attendance at all performances by all members is strictly required, except for serious illness or a death in the family. We must be notified if a student is sick, or otherwise unable to attend a performance, by a phone call BEFORE the performance. Unless it is illness related or a family emergency, the directors need to be notified **TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE**. This is simply common courtesy. We need time to make changes if a student will not be attending. An unexcused absence will result in an "F" for that performance, thus lowering the quarter grade by at least one letter, if not two. **Work is NOT considered an excused absence!** For the band program to be successful we must have every student in attendance at all performances.

Rehearsals:

School attendance policy applies for rehearsal attendance. If a student forgets their instrument, they get a warning first, and then issued a tardy for every instance after that. Three tardies = one unexcused absence.

Homecoming Week:

There are three required performances during NSHS Homecoming Week: The Parade and Aud on Thursday, followed by the halftime performance on Friday. **ALL BAND MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO MARCH**, unless they are a Varsity Football Player or Varsity Cheerleader. No exceptions will be made.

Instrument Rental

There is a \$40.00 per year rental fee if your child is using a school owned wind or percussion instrument. This minimal fee covers only a portion of the yearly maintenance performed on these instruments. Our inventory is quite old and all of these instruments need the maintenance to keep them in good working condition. This fee should be paid by August 16. Send the check to the band office and make it out to: **North Scott Band.**

Uniforms

All band members must purchase black socks and plain black shoes to complete the marching band uniform. Every student in the band will be fitted with a complete uniform. These uniforms are very expensive and need careful attention to keep them looking nice. All marching band uniforms, concert dresses and concert tuxedos will be kept at school. We furnish coat, trousers, gloves, bow ties, dresses and blouses. Each student must supply his/her own **black socks and black shoes** (PLAIN BLACK-- NO COLORED TRIM). Men will need a white tuxedo shirt for the concert season. You may contact any tuxedo rental store. Skeffington's in the Village Shopping Center has agreed to give a special discount on the tux shirt if you mention the North Scott Band when shopping there. Please also note that we do not wear the concert uniforms a couple of Spring performances. The Spring Concert and Graduation are warmer weather performances that we ask the students to wear "nice" clothes of a lighter nature. This outfit should not include jeans or jean skirts, shorts, t - shirts, gym shoes, etc. We want the students to look nice for their audiences.

Band Letters / Awards

Band students are given the opportunity to earn Band Letters based on their participation in the program. After the initial letter is earned, the students may earn bars. The point system is as follows:

- 500 points are required for a Freshman to receive a letter
- 800 accumulated points are required for a Sophomore to receive a letter
- 500 points in one year are required to receive a bar after receiving a letter

Points are given for the following musical activities:

Football games - 25, Concerts - 25, Honor Band - 25, North Scott Solo - 25, All State tryout - 25, Band Camp - 25, State Ensemble - 35, State Solo - 50, All State - 50, All State Jazz - 50, Jazz I - 50, Jazz II - 35, Mentoring Program - 20, Commencement - 15, Pep Band - 10, Summer lessons - 5

The following two awards are given at the end of the year and are voted on by the band students:

John Philip Sousa Band Award- Given to an outstanding senior band member who demonstrates strong leadership, work ethic, dedication, and contribution to the band program.

Louis Armstrong Jazz Award- Given to an outstanding senior jazz band member who demonstrates strong leadership, work ethic, dedication, and contribution to the jazz program.

Frequently Asked Questions

Marching Band

What do students need for marching band?

Besides their instruments, students are expected to purchase and bring their own lyres for their music. These are available at all local music stores. Drumline members do not need to purchase lyres. Comfortable shoes are also recommended (NO FLIP-FLOPS!) Due to wet grass, etc, we recommend a pair of "grubby" shoes to rehearse in. For performances, all students must have black shoes and black socks. (The shoes must be ALL black- stripes or swooshes of a different color are unacceptable.)

When does the marching band perform?

At all home varsity football games and the homecoming parade. The band marches pre-game and the half-time performance.

Are they responsible for keeping their uniforms during the marching band season?

No. The uniforms will be checked in and out by Music Boosters at each performance.

When do they get fitted for uniforms?

During the first couple weeks of school. Music Boosters will aid in the fitting of uniforms. *Some friendly advice:* the earlier you get fitted for a uniform, the better the chance of getting one that fits!

Where do I purchase music lyres, and are there certain kinds that are better than others?

At any music store in the Quad Cities (West, Griggs, etc.). For Trumpets and Trombones, we recommend the lyres that clamp onto the bell. If you are worried about scratching or denting the instrument, a cloth may be placed between the bell and the lyre.

Who is required to march in the Homecoming Parade?

Everyone is required to march in the parade except VARSITY Football players and VARSITY Cheerleaders.

Lessons / Grading

Does my child need to purchase a method book for lessons?

No. We will provide the method books. If it gets lost, it is the student's responsibility to replace it.

What is expected of the students in lessons?

The students are expected to prepare assigned materials in the method books.

Are lessons graded? How?

Yes, each lesson is graded based on preparation and progress.

How does the lesson schedule work?

Students sign up on their own one week ahead of time. They are asked to sign up for a time when they feel they would miss the least in a particular class. They are also instructed not to come out of the same class more than twice per quarter.

Explain the scale/arpeggio lesson.

For this lesson, the students will prepare a group of scales and arpeggios and perform them from memory. This lesson grade will be weighed more heavily than the others and will definitely be counted as one of the five required (even if it does not fall within the "top five lesson grades" for that student during that particular quarter.)

Do students receive credit for taking private lessons outside of school?

As long as it is on their PRIMARY concert instrument and happen on a regular, weekly basis. Students who study with a private instructor will need to attend 3 in-school lessons and turn in a Lesson Voucher for the remaining 2. The private instructor is to fill each out and assign a grade. The student will then turn it in to Mr. Kessinger or Mr. McMann by the end of the quarter.

When can the students do the quarterly computer assignments?

These can be done before school (after 7:00 am), after school (before 4:30 pm), or during a study hall. If a student is not satisfied with his/her score(s), they can redo the computer assignments as many times as they wish **during that particular quarter**. When the quarter ends, the grade is recorded.

Can students do the computer assignments at home?

We are now able to check out CD's to students to use on their computers at home. **HOWEVER**, in order for their grade to be recorded, they **MUST** complete the review at school.

Do summer lessons count towards the band grade?

No, but they do count towards the band letter.

Concert / Symphonic Band

How / when are the students auditioned for concert / symphonic band?

Auditions for chair placement will be held during the last part of marching band season. Audition material will be given out in lessons. Audition material will consist of the following:

- 1) Watkins-Farnum Standardized Music Test (Sight-reading)
- 2) ALL major scales - C,F,Bb,Eb,Ab,Db, Gb(F#), B,E,A,D,G, and chromatic over full range.
2 1/2 points will be awarded for each correct, complete octave.
- 3) Prepared piece(s) selected by directors.

Once they are placed, is that set for the whole year, or can they challenge?

CHALLENGES may be made with the person in the chair immediately above. The challenge is made first by informing the person to be challenged, then by informing one of the directors. The challenger is to select a piece of music from his folder, the person challenged is to select a piece from his folder, and each is to give a copy of their piece to the other THE NEXT DAY after the challenge is made. Each student will then have three school days (after exchange of music) to prepare BOTH pieces of music. On the fourth school day after music is exchanged, both players must play for the directors. All challenges will include scales. Any student refusing to accept a challenge or not abiding by the challenge rules will automatically forfeit their chair position. The only exception is if a student is ill on the day of the challenge. A challenger losing a challenge may re-challenge, but must wait at least one week. Challenges may also occur between Concert and Symphonic Bands and Jazz I and Jazz II. The directors have the option of selecting another piece of music, if they so desire. While a challenge *may* occur during the time immediately prior to a performance, a change of seating will not occur within two weeks before a performance.

Do they have uniforms?

Guys wear the provided tuxes and girls wear the provided gowns. Fitting will take place two weeks before the first concert.

Jazz Bands

How / when are the students auditioned for jazz band?

AUDITIONS for one of the two jazz bands take place in the Spring, usually early May. The auditions consist of the following:

EVERYONE BUT DRUMMERS SHOULD PREPARE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) The C, F, Bb, Eb, G, D, and A major scales from MEMORY. You will get extra points for multiple octaves.
- 2) The mixolydian and dorian scales on attached sheet (sheet may be used in audition)
- 3) Two prepared pieces- Swing and Latin
- 4) OPTIONAL (but recommended)- Perform a 12 bar improvised solo over concert Bb or F Blues changes with a pre-recorded rhythm section.

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- 3) Play swing feel with soloist, interacting.

CHALLENGES in jazz band use the same rules as for Symphonic / Concert Band. Each will pick a piece of music, prepare both, and perform the same scales used in the auditions.

How many jazz groups are there?

2 Jazz Bands and 3-4 Jazz Combos.

What instruments are eligible for jazz band?

Standard instrumentation includes Alto, Tenor, and Baritone Saxophones, Trombones, Trumpets, Piano, Bass, Drum Set, and Guitar. Clarinet, Flute, and Double Reed Players are encouraged to try out on sax if interested. We have many Flute and Clarinet players currently performing in our jazz bands. Euphonium players are also encouraged, as the school owns a couple of valve trombones that translate nicely into a jazz band setting.

Can students who have never been in jazz band audition?

Absolutely. We have had many students who have never been in jazz band before step in and do a great job.

Since we register before auditions, what should we do? We won't know if we have made it yet!

Go ahead and register for jazz band. The guidance counselors are aware that all students registered for jazz band may not make it, and will work out an alternate schedule if needed. A lot depends on the numbers auditioning, but we haven't turned too many students away in the past. And if they are all very prepared, we may take all of them.

Can you participate in jazz band without being enrolled in band?

No. Jazz bands are only open to those students currently enrolled in band.

Do they have uniforms?

No, but they are asked to dress up for performances. (Guys, shirt and tie, etc.)

What if my child plays a different instrument in jazz band?

Check with the directors for specific info. We have a couple of saxes, valve trombones, guitars, bass, etc. that your child may be able to use.

If they study privately on their jazz instrument (if different than concert instrument), can that count for their band lesson grade?

Since Jazz Band is a separate class, lessons on their jazz instrument can not count towards their band lesson grade. If a drummer studies privately and they work on classical percussion AND jazz drumset, that would be okay.

What are grades based on?

1) Participation- This grade is determined by attendance, preparation, and attitude / behavior in rehearsals and performances.

2) Artist / Theory Quizzes- Each quarter, jazz students will be quizzed on the jazz artist packets in their binders. Basic Jazz Theory may appear on these quizzes as well, covering concepts discussed in rehearsals.

3) Semester Exam- Covers artists for that semester and jazz theory

Pep Band

Is Pep Band required?

All students are required to attend four (4) pep band performances.

Does it affect their band grade?

If they attend less than four, it will affect their third quarter grade.

How is the pep band schedule determined?

Pep band dates are chosen on the basis of conflicting activities. So that students have a chance to attend, we choose dates with the least number of potential conflicts. (Musical, etc.)

Instrument Rentals

What instruments does the school rent to students?

Students are allowed (for a minimal fee) to use our percussion equipment, Tubas, Bass Clarinets, Bassoons, French Horns, Euphoniums, Oboes, and Baritone Saxophones.

How much are rental fees for said instruments?

Students pay \$40 per year.

What happens if my son/daughter plays a different instrument in jazz band?

It varies by situation. Please contact one of the directors.

Band Trip

How is the destination determined?

The directors come up with 3-4 optional destinations, and the students vote on it.

Are students required to go on the trip?

No.

How many fundraisers are done leading up to the trip?

3 total. Music Boosters Pizza Sales and Dining Tour Books every year, and candy sales on trip years.

How do I get on the chaperone list?

Chaperones are generally chosen from interested members of the Music Boosters first, and then added on a first-come, first-serve basis.

General Questions

Do the students purchase reeds, valve oil, etc. through the school?

No, they are to purchase those items at a local music store (West, Griggs, McKay)

North Scott High School Instrumental Music

**IMPORTANT:
PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO NSHS BAND DEPARTMENT ASAP**

To maintain a successful program, it is necessary for all members to take responsibility for the policies in the Department Handbook. By signing this mandatory form, the parents and students are agreeing to abide by these policies and accept the consequences stated in the handbook. If there are any questions, please call the band office (285-3316 or 285-3317). This form should be returned no later than the first day of school. As in any NSHS activity, failure to return the form will make them ineligible to participate in the performances, thus lowering their grade. Thank you for your understanding.

I have read and understand the contents of the North Scott High School Band Handbook, and will adhere to the stated policies and consequences.

Student Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Student signature

Parent/Guardian signature

Date