

2023-2024 PJH-South Band Handbook

Band Expectations

In addition to the PJH-South classroom guidelines, the following band hall guidelines apply:

1. Refrain from food, drink, gum, or candy in the band hall at any time unless approved by a director for a specific function.
2. Respect the band hall furniture and electrical equipment. Writing on the chalk board, dry-erase board, music stands, risers, and or chairs is **strictly prohibited**. Do not touch the metronome or tuner for any reason unless given permission by a band director.
3. Only percussionists have permission to touch the percussion equipment, unless otherwise instructed by a band director.
4. Do not touch another student's instrument, even with his/her permission. This expectation carries outside of the band hall as well as inside.
5. Show up **on time**, with all required materials, and be picked up on time from all band functions. Failure to do so may result in not being able to participate in future functions.
6. Treat all directors and fellow band members with **courtesy and respect**.
7. Have all materials and be ready for instruction **two** minutes after the tardy bell rings.

Consequences for misbehavior include:

1. Warning.
2. Conference with director and a parent contact.
3. Teacher Detention
4. Afterschool Detention Assigned.
5. Office Referral.
6. Exclusion from band events, activities or removal from the program.

*Serious offenses will be dealt with as outlined in the PISD Student Code of Conduct and may warrant an immediate office referral.

Rewards for good behavior:

1. Positive comment and or note to the student.
2. Positive comment and or note to the parent.
3. Prizes and Privileges.

Through membership in an organization, a PJH-South Band Member represents the band program in every action that he or she makes. **All band members are expected to behave with the utmost character and as leaders in every endeavor.**

PJH-South Band Grading Policy

Daily Grade (40%) examples include, however are not limited to:

1. **ERS (Ensemble Rehearsal Skills):** One ERS Grade is given for each week of the school year. Each student earns 20 points a day for having all of their materials and points for taking their instrument home every day. At the end of the week, if the student has taken care of his or her business, they receive a 100 for the week. Each time during the week a student forgets their materials or does not take his or her instrument home, they lose points for the day. Students may leave their instrument at school one day a week (not Friday) without penalty.
2. **Sectional Attendance:** Each student in the Honors, Symphonic and Concert 1 Bands will be given a weekly grade for attending their before or after school sectionals. Failure to attend or make up the absence will result in a daily grade of a zero.
3. **Daily Playing Grades:** Students will play for playing grades over band music and scales. Some of these will be live and some may be submitted on-line.

Major Test Grades (60%)

1. **Playing Tests:** given either in class, in sectionals or via Smart Music.
2. **All Major Performances:** School Concerts and Performances.

Attendance Policy

All students are required to attend all rehearsals and performances for which they are involved. If there is a conflict, parents/guardians should contact the band director as soon as possible by note, phone call, or e-mail. Unexcused absences from a performance will require an alternate assignment to be completed by the student. An excused absence from the school day will be considered an excused absence from any extra rehearsal or performance.

Music is a performing art. Performances and preparation for performances are essential to the art and expected by the Texas Education Agency. Membership in a performing organization is a privilege. Each member of the performing organization has a responsibility to the other members of the organization to attend all rehearsals and performances. An unexcused absence from a rehearsal or performance is a demonstration of a lack of dependability in accepting the responsibility of group membership.

Sectionals provide students with an opportunity for more individualized instruction on playing fundamentals and additional assistance with preparing specific music. These rehearsals are required for Honors, Symphonic and Concert Band members, and if missed, must be made up. Students will be given playing grades during their sectionals. We always make every effort to schedule our rehearsals and performances around other school activities such as sports, theater, cheer etc. When scheduling around activities that are not school sponsored, we will not always be able to accommodate.

Performance Requirements

There are three bands based on ability level at Pearland Junior High South. Each group will have the opportunity to perform concerts and will be expected to perform at the level appropriate for the age and ability level of that ensemble. There are performance requirements set that are appropriate for each band. The levels of the ensemble, general description of levels, as well as performance requirements are listed below.

Honors Band

This is the top performing group at PJH-South. This group consists of the most advanced members of the South Band. This group will represent PJH-South at special events, competitions, and concerts. Students in this group must pass an audition process that will include proficiency on scales and region band level music. Focus in this ensemble will be placed on ensemble skills and advanced repertoire. **Students in this ensemble are highly encouraged to take private lessons on their instrument.** Students in this group are required to audition for the All-Region Band and perform a solo at the Solo Contest. This group will also participate in the Fall Concert, Holiday Concert, Pre-UIL Competition, UIL Concert and Sightreading, a Houston Area Music Festival, University of Houston Concert, a concert at Sam Jamison Middle School, and the Spring Concert.

Symphonic Band

This ensemble is for advanced intermediate-level musicians. The group will perform concerts as well as attend special events and competitions. The main focus of this group is to master fundamental playing skills such as scales, tone production, music theory, sightreading, and citizenship. There will be special attention paid to developing ensemble skills and learning how to be a part of a competing ensemble. Students will be encouraged to audition for the All Region Band and required to play a solo at the Pearland Solo Contest. This group will participate in the Fall Concert, the Holiday Concert, Pre-UIL Competition, UIL Concert and Sightreading, a Houston area Band Festival, and the Spring Concert.

Concert 1 Band

This ensemble consists of intermediate level musicians. This group will perform at the Fall Concert, Holiday Concert, and Spring Concert. The Concert Band will participate in Pre-UIL, UIL Concert and Sightreading Competition, and a Houston area festival in the spring. Students will be required to learn a solo and encouraged to perform it at solo contest. The main focus of this group is to master fundamental playing skills such as scales, tone production, music theory, sightreading, and citizenship. This group will participate in the Fall Concert, the Holiday Concert, Pre-UIL Competition, UIL Concert and Sightreading, a Houston area Band Festival, and the Spring Concert.

Concert 2 Band

This ensemble consists of intermediate level musicians. This group will perform at the Holiday Concert, and Spring Concert. Students will be required to learn a solo and encouraged to perform it at solo contest. The main focus of this group is to master fundamental playing skills such as scales, tone production, music theory, sightreading, and citizenship.

*There will be an audition at the end of the Fall Semester for both the Concert 1 and Concert 2 Band students. Placement adjustments between these two classes will be made at this point.

Individual Practice

Guidelines for Students

Incorrect habits are sometimes more easily developed than correct habits. All habits are difficult to change, so think when you practice. Avoid simply going through the motions. Remember, proficiency on your instrument comes through development of coordination, just like any athlete.

1. **Warm up correctly.** Each instrument should have a separate warm up for home practice that differs from the full band warm up. Use a mirror (and tuner if available) and concentrate on tone quality and embouchure (or grip for percussion) during the long tone warm-ups.
2. **Set a goal** for the practice session. Don't practice just to "pass the time" but don't try to do too much on one sitting.
3. **Isolate** a problem or a section in a piece of music. It may be a rhythm, a measure, or a line of music. Repeat it over and over many times – just like shooting basketball baskets. Practice it slowly at first, and then gradually build up the speed using a metronome. Before you finish the practice session, play the difficult measure with the rest of the line or exercise.
4. **Correct repetition** of a problem area reinforces **muscle memory**.
5. In difficult technical passages, change the **rhythms and articulations** in the practice session to develop even, accurate, fluid technique.
6. Practice involves learning and reinforcing areas that are difficult for the student. Practice, therefore, is not always fun because you must play music that you have not yet mastered. Try to end each practice session with something that is fun to play and that has already been mastered.
7. Structure your practice session to get the most benefit out of your time.

Guidelines for Parents

Your child's progress in band will depend a great deal on what is achieved during their home practice sessions. Learning takes place in school, but proficiency is gained at home. You can use the following guidelines to help your child at home.

1. **Time Schedule:** A half hour a day 4-5 days a week is the recommended amount of practice for a junior high student. Practicing at the same time every day is good, but some flexibility can be built into the schedule.
2. **Climate:** Practice should be done in an area that is free of distractions away from the TV, radio and family traffic. Good light, a straight-backed chair, mirror and metronome and a music stand are all necessary for effective home practice.

Electronic tuners are affordable now and are a great tool in home practice as well. You can download apps that serve as metronomes and tuners. A few of the ones we recommend are called Tonal Energy, Soundbrenner, and insTuner. Reed players should have several reeds available during practice sessions.

3. **Encouragement:** Spend time listening to your child practice. Offer constructive criticism. You do not need to be a former band member, director, or musician to be able to hear improvement. Encourage them to play assignments and test for you. Each time a student plays for relatives or friends, it helps them feel more comfortable with public performances and competitive events.

Is your child progressing?

Parents can evaluate practice sessions by asking the following:

1. What is your assignment for today?
2. Am I hearing the same daily warm up each day? It is important to play the same daily warm up and drill with a good tone before beginning the assigned material.
3. Am I hearing music that they can already play, or am I hearing attempts at new material?
4. Is the tone quality becoming more characteristic of the instrument, or is the sound harsh, unmusical, and unpleasant?
5. Does the familiar tune or exercise more along steadily with fluent rhythm, or is it halting and jerky with no steady rhythm? Use of the metronome at home is vital.

Parental Support

Parental support is crucial to the success of every child. Therefore, it is equally crucial to any successful program such as ours. There are numerous opportunities throughout the year to become actively involved in your child's band experience. Parent volunteers are absolutely necessary and always welcome. **If you would like to volunteer or chaperone any band event or function throughout the school year, please answer yes on the acknowledgment form at the end and fill out that information. You must also complete the PISD volunteer form on the PISD web site.** Directions for completing this can be found on the PISD web site www.pearlandisd.org.

Sectionals

Honors, Symphonic, and Concert 1 Band students are **required** to attend weekly rehearsals for their own instrument section of the band (i.e.: just the flutes, just the trombones). These rehearsals are used to work on music fundamentals and details specific to each instrument, to get to know the students better in smaller setting, and to administer tests and music playoffs. **Attendance at all sectionals is required and attendance is a part of the band student's grade.** Students are notified of the section rehearsal schedule at the beginning of each season. A monthly calendar will also be handed out to help avoid any conflicts. **If a sectional must be missed due to an emergency, the student must provide a written**

excuse as soon as possible following the absence. In addition to submitting a written excuse the student must communicate with the director to make up the missed section rehearsal and/or playing test for the week. We always make every effort to schedule our rehearsals and performances around other school activities such as sports, theater, etc, however, all conflicts may not always be avoided. All 3 bands will begin sectionals within the first few weeks of school.

Braces and Orthodontics

Braces are a fact of life for many students. The directors ask the parents to **please keep us up to date with dental plans involving your child's teeth.** Braces may affect your child's playing to a degree for a short time and we, as teachers, need to prepare for that with your child. Please keep your child's performance schedule in mind when arranging the appointments for getting braces. Braces should not go on during the six weeks before UIL contest or All Region. Your children work far too hard and too long on perfecting their music to have to struggle with their "new" mouth. Please give us time to help them through so they feel good about it and can be successful.

Instrument Maintenance and Repair

Regular cleaning and maintenance of the instrument by the student will prevent many common problems. However, in the event that a repair must be done, **do not attempt to fix the instrument on your own!** Contact the band director immediately. If your child's director cannot fix the problem, they will get you the information of a local music company for repair.

Step-Up Instruments

In many cases, students are ready for a step-up (professional) model instrument after the first or second year of band. As a general rule, if your child is playing in either the Honors or Symphonic Band, then he/she may be ready for a step-up instrument. We suggest that you consult with one of the band directors when you are interested in a step-up instrument so that we may assist you in obtaining an instrument that is on the district approved list. Many times used models can be found for a reasonable price if you will give us a chance to look around for you.

School Owned Instruments

(Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium and Tuba)

All students playing a school owned instrument are required to pay a \$50 rental fee for each semester. This fee will cover annual cleaning and upkeep. **Each student is financially responsible for any damage incurred during the time that the instrument is checked out to them.**

Since these students are playing on a school owned instrument we highly encourage our school owned instrument families to take advantage of the private lesson program.

Insurance

Insurance is highly recommended to anyone who owns a musical instrument. If you do not have it, it is recommended you acquire insurance through a music store or other venue.

Eligibility

House Bill 72, which became law in 1984, mandates that a student be suspended from participation in ALL extracurricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the three-week period following the grading period in which a student received a grade lower than 70 in any class. This suspension continues for at least three weeks, and academic eligibility is not regained during the school year until such time as the student's grade in EACH CLASS is 70 or greater at progress report time or at the end of the next grading period. A student may continue to practice or rehearse with other students for an extracurricular activity; however, they will not be allowed to participate in any competitive or extracurricular events. UIL Concert and Sightreading is our state evaluation and is exempt from the eligibility requirements. 8th grade PAP Algebra is an exempt course.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are one-on-one instruction with a master teacher of a certain instrument made available through PISD. Lessons are 30 minutes and are held after school (some lessons are during the school day). Private lessons enhance and build upon what the child is learning in the music class. PRIVATE LESSONS ARE FOR ANY LEVEL – ANY GRADE STUDENT – from the student with the highest musical ability to the student who still may be struggling in certain areas of their playing (or even a beginner). The private lesson instructor evaluates where that particular student is in their musical development and pushes them further ahead. (However, students do not need to worry that they will move ahead of the class and be bored.) Private lessons work on an individual's needs, strengths, and weaknesses. What a great advantage to receive individual help coming from a class of

30 – 60 students! Students work on sound, technique, building range, and learning all notes on their instrument. Older students receive help on scales and All – Region music. All students have the opportunity to work on solo music. Registration forms for lessons and more details will be sent home with each student. **Student that play school owned instruments (Oboe, Bassoon, French Horn, Euphonium and Tuba) are highly encouraged take advantage of the private lesson program.** More details about lessons and a registration form are included at the end of this packet. You can also find the details about private lessons on the PISD Fine Arts web page <https://www.pearlandisd.org/Page/739>

Fee Management – Band Costs

PISD charges a \$35 fee for band members in the 7th and 8th grade. This fee covers a binder set (binder, dividers, pencils, and highlighters) and one band t-shirt for the year. This fee also helps to cover the cost of non – UIL or TMEA band travel, music, books, etc....

There are also costs related to participation in the band program that comes up throughout the school year. Examples include, but are not limited to: Tuxedo Shirt, solo fees for pianist, optional event fees. Payment will be required for student participation; failure to pay may result in a student not being able to participate in one or more events. Refunds will not be given unless the band department is refunded from the source of the item or service.

Band T-Shirt

The Pearland Junior High-South Band T-Shirt is the official informal uniform of the band. The shirt is purchased through the band fee. The shirt will be worn for various events throughout the year.

Formal Uniform

All Honors, Symphonic, and Concert Band members are required to purchase a tuxedo shirt for all formal concerts and competitions. First Chair Formal Wear in Alvin will come in September and fit all of the students for a tuxedo shirt. The tuxedo shirt is the only item that you will need to purchase from the school. All other parts of the uniform are to be provided by the parent. The formal concert uniform consists of:

Boys: tuxedo shirt, black dress pants, black dress socks, and black dress shoes.

Girls: tuxedo shirt, black dress pants or a black long (past the knees) skirt, black hose or socks, and black dress shoes.

Supply Checks and Band Notebook

Every 9-week grading period, students will have a supply and binder check. This is to ensure that students are prepared in the best way possible for class every day.

Binder checks require that the students have their binder with music organized in their dividers, two sharpened pencils, and a hi-liter. Supply checks require the students have their instrument along with all of the needed supplies. We will also check for cleanliness of the instrument and reeds.

Band Fundraisers

Band students have the opportunity to participate in one fundraiser for the band department each semester. Our fall fundraiser is a band department lock-in. Students who wish to attend are required to raise money by donation. Activities at the lock-in include: DJ and dancing, karaoke, inflatables, video games, movies, dodgeball, basketball, volleyball, and board games.

End of Year Event

The Pearland Junior High South Band program will take an end of the year trip in May or June. This is an optional trip and is for social/recreational purposes only. The trip is for students who are academically eligible, and students who have fulfilled the requirements for the band program for the year. Any students who receive suspensions during the school year will not be permitted on the trip.

Parent Acknowledgement

Please scan the bar code below to acknowledge the band handbook and fill out information for this year.

Pearland JH South Band
Registration 2023-2024

