

Kaneland Harter Middle School

2026 - 2027
7th Grade
Band Handbook

Philosophy

The purpose of the Harter Middle School Band program is to help each student develop his/her musical potential and performance abilities. The goal is to educate each student, within the framework of the school day, to become an accomplished musical performer. Students will be exposed to a variety of musical styles. They will also learn about rhythm, notation, scales, harmony, and intonation. As 7th graders, students will be expected to perform at their highest ability. Students will learn techniques that they will apply to their performance as more experienced musicians.

The student's responsibility is to apply the techniques and concepts addressed during band and lessons to their practice at home. Their personal responsibility will benefit the entire group. They must always remember that they are one piece of a very important puzzle. A puzzle is not complete without all it's pieces and their piece is as important as every other person's in the band.

Also, by being a member of the Harter Middle School Band, the students are committing themselves to the group for the full school year. Refer to the Student Handbook if there are further questions pertaining to this.

Rehearsals

- If you are enrolled in band and chorus, you will meet for band on Mondays and Thursdays and alternating Wednesdays, as scheduled (approximately every other week).
- If you are enrolled in only band, you will meet during your band class period every day of the week, where you will be introduced to new music and new activities during our rehearsal time.
- Students are expected to come to rehearsals with their instrument and music and be in their seat and ready to play by two minutes after the bell rings.
- Individual practice should occur at home or during study hall/lunch periods in the band practice rooms. Rehearsals are for introducing new music and fixing ensemble issues.
- Rehearsals will be graded weekly, based on attendance and participation.

Rehearsal Expectations

- Rehearsal will begin two minutes after the bell rings.
- There is no gum or food allowed in the band room.
- When any director steps onto the podium all noise should stop. No playing and no talking. Your attention should be on the director immediately.
- Anytime you are in the band room, strive to always play the best that you can. Expect only the best from yourself!
- I expect each member to behave according to our Kaneland Core Values, those being Respect and Responsibility.

Enrollment

Band is a full-year course. Students may only drop band during the first week of the semester. Students will not be allowed to drop band after the first week of the semester. Since it is very disruptive to have students leaving during the middle of semesters, it is important that students remain a part of the group throughout the school year.

Lessons

7th graders will have weekly playing assignments. Students will be assigned a lesson time during the school day and will complete the assignment by performing it at their lesson. If a student misses their weekly lesson, they may make up the assignment using *MakeMusic Cloud* or record themselves using *Canvas Studio*.

- All students have a paid subscription to *MakeMusic Cloud* through KHMS. If students had an account last year, they do not need to sign up again. All returning band students have been uploaded into *MakeMusic Cloud* for this year.
- Assignments will be listed in *Canvas* as well as in *MakeMusic Cloud*.
- Upon completion of their weekly playing assignment, students will need to include a self-assessment of their performance detailing how they were successful in that performance and what they need to work on for future assessments.
- Lessons will be graded weekly (on Mondays for the previous week) and will account for 20% of the overall grade. Zeros will be used as placeholders in *Canvas*.

until assignments have been completed. However, students may make up the assignments for credit until the end of the grading term.

Grading

- Grades will be figured on a point system. Points will be awarded for rehearsals, playing assignments (lessons), concerts/performances, and weekly worksheets.
- Rehearsals are worth 10 points per week and count toward the formative grade. Rehearsal grades will be calculated by participation, having the proper equipment, and being prepared.
- Concerts and performances are required and worth 100 points, counting toward the summative grade. Excused absences will be given the opportunity to complete a make-up assignment to receive points. Unexcused absences will result in a zero. **Excuses for concerts/performances MUST be received one week prior to the event** (unless there is a medical or personal/family emergency).
- Playing assignments (lesson attendance/participation) will also be graded. Each assignment will be worth 20 points and will count toward the formative grade.
 - If a student attempts a lesson and it is obvious that they have not practiced, they will not receive credit at that time.
 - To help keep track of their grades as the quarter progresses, there will be completion dates assigned and zeros will be used as placeholders until the assignment is completed. Points will be input when assignments are completed.
- Students will also have weekly bell-ringer worksheets to complete, leading up to a summative assessment at the end of each quarter. The weekly worksheets will count toward the formative grade.

Instruments and Equipment

- All students should come to rehearsal with their instrument, band folder, and a pencil.
- Instrument cases should be labeled clearly with a tag that lists the students' names. I recommend a more detailed labeling on the inside of the case for safe-keeping. Students will be assigned a cubicle to store their instruments in during the day. Some of the smaller instruments (flutes, clarinets, oboes) may have to be stored in shared cubicles.
- Each student is personally responsible for his/her own instrument. **DO NOT ALLOW ANYONE ELSE TO PLAY YOUR INSTRUMENT.** Other people will play it incorrectly and could damage it for you.
- School-owned instruments (percussion equipment, french horns, tubas, bassoons, tenor saxes, bari saxes, bass clarinets) will be loaned to students as needed. These instruments will be loaned in good condition and it is the student's responsibility to maintain these instruments. Please let your director know immediately if you notice a problem with the instrument you are assigned to. Students and parents must sign and return a contract to borrow school-owned instruments.
- Students are also expected to have the equipment necessary to keep their instruments in good working order. This includes cleaning kits, valve oil, slide grease,

cork grease, reeds. Percussionists need to have their own sticks and they should be labeled. Harter Middle School will not supply these items. However, they can be ordered and delivered to school through PM Music or Quinlan & Fabish. Quinlan & Fabish has a full-service store located in Montgomery. PM Music has a full-service store in Aurora and will deliver directly to KHMS. Most music stores should have these supplies as well.

- Because of our marching/pep band performances this year, students will also need to have a marching lyre and a flip folder.

MakeMusic Cloud® (Formerly Smart Music)

We will be using MakeMusic Cloud for lessons. We have implemented a system of using MakeMusic Cloud and every student will receive a free subscription to the program. All performance lessons will be assigned through MakeMusic Cloud and can be completed on the online program.

Private Lessons

Taking private lessons with an expert on your specific instrument is one of the best ways to improve your musicianship. There are many professionals in the area offering private lessons. Consider reaching out to the following local resources for recommendations:

- PM Music (Aurora) - www.pmmusiccenter.com
- Northern Illinois University (DeKalb) - <https://www.niu.edu/external-programs/community-school-arts/programs/music-lessons.shtml>
- Music and Arts (Aurora)
- Elgin Community College (Elgin)

Uniforms

- The 7th grade band members will be required to have two uniforms for the school year.
- For marching/pep band, we will be wearing black long-sleeve T-shirts with the Kaneland Middle School Bands logo on the front. The shirts are \$13.00. This T-shirt will be worn at our marching performances and our pep band performance. In addition to the band t-shirt, students will need to wear blue jeans and tennis shoes. Shoes must have laces and backs. No sandals. Since our marching performances are in the fall, you will want to have a turtleneck or sweatshirt to wear under your band t-shirt and purchase a band t-shirt large enough to accommodate the extra clothing. We will not wear jackets over our t-shirts.
- For concerts, students are required to wear black pants/skirts and white shirts/blouses. Skirts should be knee-length or longer, no mini-skirts please. Shirts should have collars and should be short-sleeve length or longer, no tank tops please. This concert dress is consistent with the chorus at the Middle School.

Jazz Band

- There will be auditions for placement in Jazz Band. Because of the limited instrumentation in a jazz band, there may be students who are not placed in the Jazz Band.
- Jazz Band will rehearse on Thursdays from 2:45pm-4:15pm. All of the information on jazz band auditions will be sent home by email prior to the start of the school year. Students can also pick up paper copies of the audition music the first week of school.
- Students who participate in sports or a conflicting after school activity must discuss this conflict with Mr. Loest at their audition. Students placed in the Jazz Band are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances.

Band Awards

- All students in band will receive a gold service bar that can be worn on their high school lettermen jackets. Silver star pins will be awarded to students who participate in extra-curricular activities related to band (ILMEA District Festivals and the Conference Honor Band Festival). Gold star pins will be awarded to students who have demonstrated leadership roles in the band throughout the year (section leaders/band assistants). Members of the Jazz Band will be awarded a Jazz pin.

Performing Arts Boosters

The Kaneland Performing Arts Boosters is a revamped Music Boosters. This new group will provide advocacy and support for Kaneland music and theater programs for middle and high school. Please consider becoming a member of this important group. It takes a great deal of "parent power" to provide quality music opportunities for our students. YOU ARE NEEDED! Please visit the Boosters website at www.kpaboosters.org/ for more information.

Communication and Agreement

Agreement

I have read, understand and will comply with the guidelines set in the Band handbook.

Student Print Name

Parent/Guardian Print Name

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent E-mail(s) (very important)

Communication

In an effort to make communication with parents and students as effective as possible, I am working to streamline that process. You can find all relevant information about our band activities in the below listed places. The district is moving to a paperless environment, so most communication items will be sent home electronically. If you need paper copies, please check below.

_____ Paper copies sent home with students

Electronic Communications

- **Email** (please provide email address(es) above)
- **Canvas**
- **Remind Messages** (Remind is an anonymous mass-texting program – this is a one-way announcement system used during events)
 - Please join the Remind group for your student(s)
 - 8th Grade Band members and parents ☐ text @khmsband7 to 81010
 - 7th Grade Band members and parents ☐ text @khmsband8 to 81010
 - Jazz Band will have a separate group once the ensemble is set
- **Infinite Campus**

Please sign and return this form in a sealed envelope with your name by **Monday, August 17th**. Thank you for your cooperation!