

Berry Miller Junior High School Band Course Syllabus

Chris Bennett, Matthew Hogan, Abigail Roalson, Josh Hartwell – Directors

Emails: Bennettc@pearlandisd.org; Hoganj@pearlandisd.org; RoalsonA@pearlandisd.org

Conference Period: 12:09 – 12:55 pm

About the Program

The Berry Miller Junior High Band is the largest student organization on campus with a proud tradition of excellence since 2008. The program consistently earns Superior ratings at UIL Concert & Sight-Reading contests and has received many state and national honors, including:

- Four Time Top 10 finalist in the TMEA Honor Band Competition (2017, 2019, 2023, 2025)
- Upcoming Performance at the Midwest International Band & Orchestra Clinic (2026)
- Performance at the National Concert Band Festival in Indianapolis (2024)
- Recipient of the John Philip Sousa Sudler Silver Cup (2022)
- Honors & Symphonic Band named multiple National Winners in Mark of Excellence & Citation of Excellence
- All Band are frequent “Best in Class” awards at regional festivals

Curriculum Overview

1st Nine Weeks

- Region Band Preparation (Honors & Symphonic)
- Midwest Clinic Preparation (Honors)
- Fall Concert
- Scales & Technique
- Range Development
- Fundraiser

2nd Nine Weeks

- Final Region Band Preparation, Contest, and Concert (Honors & Symphonic)
- Midwest Clinic Preparation (Honors)
- Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic Performance and Trip to Chicago (Honors)
- Winter Concert
- Scales, Technique, Range Development
- Begin UIL Concert & Sight Reading and Midwest Submission Pieces
- Band Lock-In

3rd Nine Weeks

- Pre-UIL Contest
- UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Preparation
- Begin Solo Preparation
- Continued Scales, Technique & Sight Reading

4th Nine Weeks

- Shadow Creek Festival
- Pearland ISD Solo Contest
- Complete Scale Requirements

- Audition Material for Dawson HS or BMJH 8th Grade
 - End-of-Year Spring Trip
-

Student Expectations

Band students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of character, honesty, and integrity while following all rules in the Pearland ISD Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, and Band Handbook.

Pillars of the Berry Miller Junior High School Band

- Be on time, kind, dependable, prepared, and engaged
- Be polite, coachable, honest, exceptional, and accountable
- Take pride, but always strive for improvement every day

Band Rules

1. Show respect to all students, staff, and visitors.
2. Follow instructions the first time they are given.
3. Handle only equipment you are authorized to use.
4. Only band students are allowed in the band hall.
5. Stay in your assigned band room.
6. Get permission before entering the director's office.
7. No food, drink, or gum in the band hall.

Technology Platforms

BandApp

Used for announcements, reminders, and general program information:

- Primary means of communication from directors to parents/band members
- All features locked down for security and safety
- If you need to visit with us, please contact us via email or Canvas only

MakeMusic

Used for digital practice and assessments:

- Scale & Music Mastery Pass-Offs
- Sight Reading Assignments
- Solo Accompaniment Practice
- Enrichment music exploration

Canvas

District LMS for assignments and communication:

- Weekly Practice Logs
- Playing Test Videos
- Selected Assignments

Communication

As per Pearland ISD policy, the following are the only means of communication between teachers to families:

- Teacher to Parent (or vice versa): May only communicate via Skyward, email, or Canvas
- Teacher to Student (or vice versa): May only communicate via Canvas

Grading Policy

Daily Grades (40%)

- Practice Logs
- Daily Participation
- Binder & Supply Checks
- Locker Checks
- Assignments (Canvas or MakeMusic)
- Written Work

Major Grades (60%)

- Playing & Written Tests
- Sectional Attendance
- Before/After-School Rehearsals
- Listening Assignments
- Concert Performances
- Solo Contest Participation
- Recorded Tests (Canvas/MakeMusic)

Attendance Policy

Excused Absences

An absence may be excused at the discretion of the band directors if one of the following applies:

- **Personal illness** (student absent from school that day)
- **Family emergency**
- **Death in the family**
- **Medical appointment** (must provide documentation)
- **Other serious circumstances** deemed appropriate by a director

Requirements for excusal:

- Notify a band director **immediately via email**
- Provide documentation (e.g., parent email, medical note)

If a student misses a **performance**, they must contact a director immediately and will be assigned an **alternative assignment**.

Unexcused Absences

An absence is unexcused if it does not have prior approval or falls under the following:

- Appointment without documentation
- Academic tutorials
- Club meetings

- Other extracurricular activities
- Oversleeping or forgetting the event

Unexcused absences may be made up for **partial credit (70)** through an alternative written assignment.

Band/Athletic Students: Band Directors go to great lengths to schedule based on sports seasons. The directors and coaches have a few absolutes to help our shared band/athletic members when planning rehearsals and sectionals:

- Band/Athletic students will NEVER miss a game/meet/match/etc.
- Band/Athletic students will NEVER miss the day BEFORE a game/meet/match/etc.

If a band rehearsal/event conflicts with sports practice, coaches allow students to miss **one practice without penalty**. Mr. Bennett and the coaches will coordinate absences directly via email. Students should **inform both the band directors and coaches** of any conflicts—communication is a shared responsibility between all parties.

Academic Eligibility (No Pass, No Play)

- Students must maintain a 70 or above in all classes to participate in extracurricular events.
- Ineligible students may rehearse but not perform for 3 school weeks.
- Eligibility can be regained after the waiting period with passing grades.
- Concerts (Fall, Winter, Pre-UIL, Spring) and UIL Evaluations are **curricular** and participation is required regardless of eligibility status.
- Progress reports can affect eligibility; note the 2nd progress report of the 1st Nine Weeks can cause loss of eligibility.

Curricular vs. Extracurricular Activities

Curricular (Required & Graded)

- Daily Classes & Assignments
- Sectionals & Masterclasses
- Listenings
- Before/After-School Rehearsals
- Concerts (Fall, Winter, Pre-UIL, Spring)
- UIL Concert & Sight-Reading
- Solo Contest

Extracurricular (Eligibility Required)

- Dawson Band Night
- Region Band/Orchestra Auditions & Clinics
- Band Festivals (e.g., Shadow Creek Showcase)

Required Supplies

Tuner/Metronome

- Recommended: TonalEnergy App (\$7.99, iOS/Android/Amazon) — advanced features and affordable
- Free apps are acceptable but may have limited features

Band Binder

Must include:

- Black 1.5" or 2" three-ring binder with pockets
- 3-hole pencil bag
- 5 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter
- 10+ sheets of notebook paper
- 5-tab dividers labeled: Fundamentals, Scales & Technique, Daily Drill, Music, Private Lesson Material

Instrument Supplies

- Flute: Silk swab, tuning rod, plugs, foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Oboe/Bassoon: 4 reeds, reed case, water cup, silk swab, seat strap (bassoon), foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Clarinet/Bass Clarinet & Saxophones: 4 reeds, reed case, silk swab, mouthpiece cap, neck strap, (sax), foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Trumpet: Valve Oil, foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Horn: Rotary Oil, foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Trombone: Slide Oil, small squirt bottle for slide water, foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Euphonium: Valve Oil, foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Tuba: Rotary Oil, foldable music stand (for home practice)
- Percussion: IP RS251 VIB Mallets, IP MB-1 Stick/Mallet Bag, IP LD Snare Sticks, IP 3106B Marimba Mallets, IP GTX-5 TIMP, IP RP-1R XYLO/BELL Mallets (www.steveweissmusic.com)

Concert Uniforms

Formal Uniform (Updated for 2025–2026)

- Students fitted Aug 20 & 21, 5:15–7:00 PM (Main Band Hall)
- Ordered through First Chair Formal Wear:
 - Men's black tuxedo shirt – required (\$30)
 - Women's black formal blouse – required (\$37)
 - BMJH red long tie – required for boys (\$18)
 - BMJH red/white pearl necklace – required for girls (\$18)
 - Hemmed tuxedo pants – highly recommended (\$55)
- Items to purchase separately:
 - Solid black dress pants (if not ordering tuxedo pants)
 - Solid black dress shoes (closed toe for girls)
 - Solid black belt (if pants have beltloops)
 - Solid black socks & solid black undershirts

Informal Uniform

- Berry Miller Junior High Band t-shirt (provided yearly, covered by band fee)
- Blue Jeans and/or khaki material type shorts

Sectionals

- Small group rehearsals by instrument once per week (except Concert Band 2, which has occasional full rehearsals)
- Focus on instrument-specific technique beyond full band class

- Required and graded as a major portion of the course
 - Attendance is required; notify directors ASAP about conflicts
 - Directors coordinate schedules with coaches to avoid conflicts with games/practices
 - Missing one sectional means missing over 10% of sectional content for the grading period
-

Listenings / Pass-Offs

- 10–15 minute individual help sessions with directors
 - Required for all students and count as major grades
 - Students select their own time slots
 - Provide focused feedback on region music, solos, or UIL music
-

Flexibility & Scheduling

- Directors work with coaches and sponsors to allow participation in all activities
- Coaches allow band/athletic students to miss one practice for band sectionals without any penalty
- Sectional schedules may adjust with sports seasons
- Guaranteed no missed games or pre-game practices for athletes due to sectionals

Concerts & Major Performances

Concerts

- Required and graded major events each grading period
- Demonstrate growth and performance skills

Solo Contest

- Required for all junior high students
- Students perform independently with accompanist (\$40 fee paid directly)

Pearland ISD Pre-UIL Contest

- Required for Honors, Symphonic, and Concert Band 1
- Prepares students for UIL Contest and sight-reading
- Requires 90% attendance in rehearsals, sectionals, listenings

UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Evaluation

- Most important event for Symphonic and Concert Band 1
- One of the more important events for the Honors Band
- Bands perform prepared music and sight-read new music for judges
- Ratings from Superior (I) to Poor (V); Sweepstakes awarded for Superior in both

Local Festivals

- Spring events such as Shadow Creek Showcase of Sound
- Judged with “Best in Class” awards

Recording Competitions

- Honors Band participates in TMEA State Honor Band (odd years) and National Wind Band Honors contests (every year)
-

Required Fees

- **PISD Band Course Fee:** \$35 (covers clinicians, music, supplies, shirts) — pay via Skyward
 - **PISD Instrument Rental Fee:** \$120 annually for school-owned instruments — pay via Skyward
-

Fundraisers

Rock-A-Thon Fundraiser supports:

- Why is this important?
- One time per year
- Spring Trip costs
- Private lesson scholarships
- Supplies & music
- Contest entry fees & transportation
- Clinicians
- General student support
- Phone/Text Fundraiser – how does that work with HB 1481?
 - During school fundraiser set up using school devices during classes.
 - After school when students are at home, student will activate the fundraiser on their personal devices.
 - During school fundraiser participation party!
 - Held during class using Pearland ISD device – as per HB 1481, students are not allowed to use personal smart devices during the school day (7:45 am – 3:55 pm).

Private Lessons

- Highly encouraged for all students
 - Required for students playing school-owned instruments
 - Instructors include professionals and symphony musicians
 - Personalized instruction accelerates musical growth
-

Berry Miller Junior High Band Spring Trip

- Annual reward trip for hard work
 - 2027 Trip to Camp Cho-Yeh near Livingston, TX (May 8, 2027)
 - More info at the band parent meeting
-

Band Resources

- **Band Handbook:** berry-miller.pearlandisd.org/fine-arts/band/band-handbooks
- **Berry Miller Band Website:** berry-miller.pearlandisd.org/fine-arts/band/berry-miller-junior-high-band
- **Dawson High School Band Website:** dawsoneagleband.com