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Portage Central HS Band Program Scheduling Info 2025

AKA "Fitting Band in your schedule in 9th Grade (and beyond!)"

Dear Band Students & Families,

This guide is intended to help you understand the scheduling process for any incoming Portage Central HS student. We hope you will make the commitment to further your music education – you won't regret it!

There are two course offerings for Band at PCHS:

PC Winds & Percussion (1 credit, full year course)

- This course is open to all 9th-12th grade students, and focuses on furthering the fundamentals of playing a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument
- Students in PC Winds & Percussion perform at 3 concerts, District Band Festival, and Graduation
- There is no Marching Band component for this course
- Prerequisite for this course is successful completion of 8th Grade Band or teacher recommendation

Symphonic/Concert Band (1 credit, full year course)

- This course is open to 9th-12th grade students who receive a teacher recommendation
- All students in this course participate in Marching Band – which requires participation in August Pre-Camp & Band Camp, evening rehearsals in the fall, and Marching Band performances
- The first 9 weeks of school are focused solely on Marching Band. After the first 9 weeks, students transition to the "concert season" which begins with placement into the two ensembles – Symphonic Band and Concert Band.
- Students in Symphonic/Concert Band perform at 3 concerts, Band Festival, Graduation & the Portage Memorial Day Parade
- The prerequisite for this course is teacher recommendation

Students – if you are unsure about which placement is the right fit, *you can just let your counselor know that you would like to have Band on your schedule* when meeting with them. The Band Directors will work with you and the PCHS counselors to help update course placements and make any necessary adjustments after the scheduling process is completed and before the end of the school year.

Special information for **Color Guard** members of the Marching Band:

- For those students who play an instrument, you will register for "Symphonic/Concert Band" and participate with the Color Guard for the first 9 weeks, then audition for Symphonic/Concert Band placements and play your instrument for the remainder of the school year.
- For students who wish to participate in Color Guard who do not play an instrument, you will take "Symphonic/Concert Band for First Semester only. Students who take advantage of this opportunity will have a Seminar course for the second half of Semester One.

Why Should I Enroll in Band in High School?

Now that we've discussed how the scheduling works, here are some reasons you should consider taking Band next year and making it a priority in your schedule:

1. You'll make a **smooth transition to High School** – getting to know friends in 9-12th grade and having the chance to get to know PCHS more than other peers who aren't in Band. When you're in band, you'll always have a place that you fit in and belong!
2. Being in Band gives you the opportunity to participate in: **Jazz Band, Indoor Percussion, Solo & Ensemble, All-State Band Auditions**, and much more!
3. **Being in Band is advantageous in college admissions/scholarships** – as many colleges look very carefully at co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and look very favorably on longer-term commitments such as Band. With our Band being a high-achieving and successful program, students who continue with Band throughout their senior year have a strong asset on their resume to complement their other academic achievements.
4. Band offers many **leadership, service, and volunteer opportunities** that employers and colleges are looking for in their prospective workers and students.
5. Band can be a great way to **balance out a rigorous schedule**. Plus, many studies show that students who participate in Band **tend to do better with their grades** than their peers who are not studying music. Many of our most successful band students are involved in KAMSC, EFE/EFA, and the IB and Honors courses, including the IB Diploma. Just ask your counselor and the band directors if you need help with making this work in your schedule!
6. Committing to Band in your first year will help knock out your **Fine Arts requirement**, which is required for Graduation. Also, for those who are recommended for Marching Band, the same class will also help you to apply for a **Physical Education waiver**, which frees up additional room in your schedule for other electives.
7. Our band directors are **supportive of PCHS Athletics** and we work very hard with students who want to be athletes and also continue with music! We have a place for everyone and can work with you to see what's possible with your athletic schedule. Just send an email and we can start talking through what will work best for you – **you CAN do both!**
8. The Portage Central Band program has a long tradition of excellence.. When you decide to do band at CHS, **you are joining a winning team and will be part of a successful program.**
9. There is nothing more rewarding than playing a great concert for a packed auditorium with all your friends and family supporting you along the way. **The memories you make will last a lifetime!**

A Closer Look at your Students' Freshman Year Schedule

Here are the courses REQUIRED for Freshman Year:

- 1) ENGLISH
- 2) SOCIAL STUDIES
- 3) MATH
- 4) SCIENCE

Recommended Freshman Year:

5) **Fine or Applied Arts State Requirement Class (1 Year)** – The best choice for band kids is...Band!

Yes, 1 year of band meets this State of Michigan Graduation requirement!

- 6) Foreign Language
- 7) Health, Seminar, or any other elective of interest

Health Class

There is a HEALTH Requirement for HS students...however, you DO NOT need to take this as a freshman. Although many take it in 9th grade, some wait until 10th grade if needed for their schedule.

Gym Waiver

You are required to take 3 semesters of PE in HS -- but, if you do 3 years of Marching Band, you can waive that requirement! This could give you more room and flexibility in your schedule. Another way to waive gym classes is by participating in a sport, so ask your counselor for more details.

FINALLY, as you can see from above there are only 4 REQUIRED classes for the freshman year, which leaves you to make choices about the other 3 classes. If students choose band, then students still have room for foreign language and more science or additional electives!!

Questions/Concerns?

We are available to help with anything you need as your son/daughter makes the transition into high school. Reach out to the PC Band Director team for any help you need!

Bryan J. VanToll
bjvantoll@portageps.org

Deanna C. Russell
drussell@portageps.org

Allison B. Patrick
apatrick@portageps.org