



Beginning Band Syllabus

Year-long

SY2026-2027

Teacher	Room Number
Dr. Ernest Jennings ernest.jennings@dodea.edu	Band Room, 1.G.02

Course Description:

Beginning Band (year-long) is a course for students in Grades 6-8 and aligned to DoDEA College and Career Ready Standards Arts (CCRSA) and National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). This course includes four artistic processes for creating, performing, responding, and connecting and introduces students to the following: basic-level instrumental music techniques such as tone production, articulation, breath control, pitch discrimination, melodic and rhythm concepts and patterns and sound practice skills and habits. Solo, small and large-group ensembles performing a variety of repertoire for a mixed ensemble of winds, brass, and percussion are explored.

Link to CCRS standards: *Music* - [Traditional & Emerging Ensembles: 6 - 12](#)

Expectations and Goals

Students will demonstrate correct instrument assembly/disassembly, posture, breathing, hand position, embouchure and maintenance and care of their assigned instrument. Students will be introduced to and expected to use academic language and terminology in describing music, perform basic rhythms in duple and triple time of beginner level complexity with good tone, phrasing, dynamic contrast, and articulation. Understanding the basic elements of music, basic notation and nomenclature will be demonstrated via quizzes (electronic) and class performances. Performance practice will be demonstrated via seminar concert(s) for peers and/or public performance(s) for parents.

Specific Goals: (Year-end)

- Successful completion of melodies/etudes studied in *Sound Innovations, Book 1*
- Beginning performance skills achieved (instrument assembly, hand position, embouchure, tone, and sticking patterns)
- Basic rhythm reading skills in various meters (2/4, 3/4, 4/4, cut-time)
- Percussionists: Beginning-level proficiency of 10/40 standard rudiments
- Percussionist: Introduction and performance development on (snare drum; bass drum; crash cymbals; timpani; and auxiliary instruments)

Graded Components

Rehearsal Grade = 10%, Performance Assessments = 25%, Assignments/Quizzes = 25%, Performances (end of semester/year public concerts = 40%

Late Work & Missing Assignments

- **Assignment Due Dates:** Assignments are expected to be submitted by the teacher's established due date. If an assignment is not submitted on the due date and the student is present, it will be marked **MSG (Missing)** in ASPEN. An **MSG** temporarily counts as a **0** in the student's grade until the assignment is submitted.
- **Two-School-Day Grace Period:** Students have **two school days** after the original due date to submit the missing assignment for **full (earned) credit (due at the beginning of class on the second day)**. This grace period provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the learning standard while encouraging responsibility and timely completion of work. Assignments submitted during this window are graded using the same academic expectations and quality standards as assignments

submitted on time. **NOTE: This policy does not include homework assignments, rather assignments with a pre-set due date.**

- **After the Grace Period:**
 - If the assignment is turned in, the grade will be changed from MSG to the earned grade.
 - If the assignment has **not** been submitted by the end of the grace period, the assignment is finalized so the gradebook accurately reflects current progress and teachers can maintain the pace of instruction.
 - **The MSG will be replaced with a permanent NTI (Not Turned In; counts as a 0) in the gradebook.**
 - At the beginning of class on the second day, the assignment is considered closed and is no longer eligible for full credit unless an approved exception applies.
- **Exceptions:** This policy does not replace accommodations or other approved supports. Exceptions may include:
 - Excused absences (students receive additional time in accordance with school expectations)
 - IEP or Section 504 accommodations
 - Teacher-approved extensions communicated in advance
 - Administrative exceptions when appropriate
 - *Teachers may accept work after the two-school-day window at their professional discretion, but are not required to do so.*

Why This Policy?

Our goal is to ensure grades communicate **student learning**, not behavior alone. Research consistently shows that students benefit when they have a reasonable opportunity to complete missing work while still being held accountable for meeting deadlines. This policy provides both.

 GRADING SCALE		ASPEN CODES YOU MIGHT SEE	
GRADE	NUMERICAL RANGE	 MSG	Missing (counts as 0; hurts grade)
A	90 – 100	 ABS	Absent – Temporary Input (counts as 0; hurts grade) <i>Will be changed after work is turned in.</i>
B	80 – 89	 NTI	Not Turned In (counts as 0; hurts grade)
C	70 – 79	 EXC	Excused (does not affect grade)
D	60 – 69	 INC	Incomplete (no effect until fixed)
F (failing)	0 – 59	 BLANK	No Grade yet

Consistent schoolwide approaches promote:

- Clear expectations for all students
- Timely feedback for families
- Accurate communication of academic progress
- Student responsibility and organization
- Fairness and consistency across all classrooms

Performance Assessments (PAs)

Performance Assessments are individual assignments that reinforce continued musical growth and technique. Students submit their best video recordings (via Google Classroom) that demonstrate their preparation, technique, and musicianship. Specific instructions are provided for each PA.

Behavior Expectations and Classroom Management:

- Arrive to class on time.
- Treat others with respect and participate in a positive and inclusive manner.
- Gather materials, instrument(s) and prep for class/rehearsal.
- Read the board (IFP) for *Rehearsal Agenda, Objectives, and Success Criteria*
- **Warm-up:** Play your instrument; move your fingers/hands/wrists in preparation for rehearsal
- **Do not** play another student's instrument.

- Brass players use designated trash cans for emptying water keys - no expectations.
- Sign-out/in when you have to leave class (i.e. use the restroom, requested by another teacher, or scheduled appointment).
- When class/rehearsal concludes, "swab out"- place instruments in case and materials in assigned lockers. Percussionist, return sticks/mallets to the cabinet; cover timpani and mallet instruments.
- If you have a question - please ask. I'm here to help you.
- Remain focused and engaged. Do your best and do not be afraid to make a mistake.
- Have Fun!!

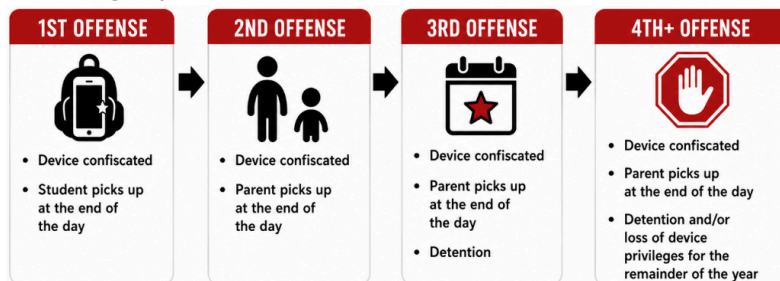
School Tardy Policy:

- Students must be in the learning studio when the bell rings or they will be marked tardy
- Students 5 or more minutes late must have a pass from the front office
- 3rd unexcused tardy = consequence (teacher communicated & assigned)

DoWEA Digital Device Policy:

To maximize learning and minimize distractions, SpMS follows DoWEA's Digital Device Policy.

- Personal electronic devices (including cell phones, smart watches/glasses used for communication, earbuds/headphones, and similar devices) **must be powered off and stored away during the instructional day unless a staff member specifically authorizes their use for an instructional purpose or an approved accommodation.**
- Students are expected to follow all staff directions regarding electronic devices.
- Unauthorized use of a digital device may result in the device being secured in accordance with school procedures and may result in additional disciplinary consequences.
- Students are responsible for the care and security of their personal devices. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronics.



BAND DIGITAL DEVICE POLICY:

- **Band classes have received an exemption from the Principal for the use of student personal digital devices for ACADEMIC PURPOSES.**
 - **Approved Academic Purpose: Phone/devices are to ONLY be used for metronome timing.**
 - **Other use of devices is prohibited.**

Conferences:

Parents should feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, comments (or request for conference) at any time through email — of which is the best method of contacting me at (ernest.jennings@dodea.edu).

Tutorials/Assistance with Assignments

Pace of instruction/rehearsals shall be based on the skill-set/experience of students enrolled in the class. Sufficient time during class instruction will be provided to ensure comprehension of concepts covered. The instructor will demonstrate desired style and phrasing as well as be available for tutorials and extra assistance if needed outside of class (i.e. during Seminar or after school) per request. Reference recordings provided for style, character, phrasing, and interpretation.

Course Materials

Required Materials:

- Assigned (primary) instrument – (Students & parents required to complete DoD Property Agreement form)
- Sound Innovations Book 1* (Provided)

Secondary Music Studied:

- Standard and contemporary beginning band repertoire for mixed winds, brass and percussion at difficulty grade level .5–2.0.
- Beginning technical exercises and selected excerpts to facilitate development of proper tone, rhythm, articulation, phrasing, and musical expression. (Provided)

Materials for Class:

- Pencil(s) (Note: Pencils are the only authorized writing utensil in band - No Exceptions).
- Manuscript paper (Optional and initial copies provided)
- Notebook (to jot down notes, vocabulary, rhythm sketch, etc)

Course outline governed by CCRS standards and instructional strategies outlined in applicable method book(s).

Quarter 1-2		Quarter 3-4	
Sound Innovations Bk. 1 Unit 1-4	Etudes/Concert performance repertoire	Sound Innovations Bk. 1 Unit 5-6	Etudes/Concert performance repertoire
End of Qtr Perf. Eval (Material covered during the quarter)		Winter Concert (TBD - Fall 2026 -) Spring Concert (TBD -May 2027) Treated as a “final performance exam”	

Example: Performance evaluation rubric. (used for concerts)

Performance Eval: Score: ____/30	5	4	3
Tone/Intonation	Consistently performs with excellent intonation, tone, and breath support	Occasionally performs with good intonation, tone, and breath support	Uncharacteristic tone, poor intonation, and infrequent breath support.
Technical facility	Consistently performs correct notes, fingerings (sticking) and pitch accuracy.	Occasionally performs correct notes, fingerings (sticking) and pitch accuracy.	Often performs incorrect notes, fingerings (sticking) and inconsistent pitch.
Musicality/Style	Consistently performs with full attention to all printed dynamic and style markings.	Occasionally performs printed dynamic and style markings.	Minimal attention to dynamic and style markings. Recommend remedial help.
Articulation	Consistently performs correct articulations and clarity of notes.	Occasionally performs correct articulations and clarity of notes.	Minimal attention to articulations or clarity of notes.

Additional Information:

Student Leadership: Students should inform Dr. Jennings of their interest in a leadership position.

- Section Leader (SL) – (Selected by audition, (SLs) demonstrate higher technical and performance proficiency on their assigned instrument and possess ability to lead members of his/her section providing musical & technical feedback).
- Group Leader (GL) – (Ad hoc position granted to student(s) who demonstrate comprehension of concepts covered and possess the ability to lead a small group of his/her peers during small-group rehearsal sessions).

Concert Attire:

Attire for public concerts shall include: December "Winter Concert" = Black pants; Black socks; Black/Dark shoes; and "holiday" appropriate shirt. May "Spring" = Black pants; Black socks; Black/Dark shoes; Spang "Music" polo. Note: The "Spring" concert is our "*Fine Arts Extravaganza*" featuring the entire MS/HS Fine Arts programs.