

Tab 1



Portage Northern High School Bands

Student & Parent Handbook 2025-26

COMMUNICATION

Email (**PREFERRED**): wmufarreh@portageps.org

Phone - Band Room (**Mufarreh**) - (269) 323-5421

Band Office - (269) 323-5741

Website: pnbands.org Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PNHSBands>

Email newsletters are sent out weekly via Skyward & Email!

SCHEDULE OF PERFORMANCE & EVENTS

[THIS](#) link for the **FULL PN Bands** Google Calendar

[THIS](#) link for the Google Document for LIVE updates of **NHS & NMS** Events

[THIS](#) link for the **PNMB** Schedule Google Document

*Below are the events that include the NHS Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band & Concert Band**

October 16 – 7 pm - NHS Wind Ensemble & NMS 7/8th Grade Band Concert

December 12 – 7 pm - NHS Music Department Collage Concert (All 9th-12th Music Department)

December 13 – 7 pm - NHS Music Department Collage Concert (All 9th-12th Music Department)

Feb 7– MSBOA HS District Solo & Ensemble @ BC Lakeview HS (Optional Grades 9-12, registration due late Nov)

Feb 25 – 7 pm – NHS Bands Pre-Festival Concert

March 4 OR 5 – NHS Wind Ensemble at MSOBA District 11 Festival - Site & Performance time TBD

March 12, 13, OR 14 – NHS Concert & Symphonic Band at MSBOA District 11 Festival - Site & Performance time TBD

March 20/21 – All Day – State Solo & Ensemble @ Portage Northern HS - For those who qualified at Districts

May 14 – 7 pm - NHS Spring Awards Concert - Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band & PNIPE (Indoor Percussion)

May 19 – Graduation, Non-Graduating & Rising Wind Ensemble Members, 5:30 pm Call Time

May 25 – Portage Memorial Day Parade Performance –PNMB Members, Required.

June 10-14 – PN Band & Orchestra NYC Trip

**** All Required unless otherwise noted***

PHILOSOPHY

Portage Northern Bands is dedicated to providing meaningful educational and artistic opportunities for all students in the performing arts. Our programs are designed to foster both social and artistic growth in a professional and supportive environment. Through creative and innovative experiences, built on a foundation of high-quality instruction and strong leadership, students are encouraged to reach their fullest potential.

We believe that “the process is just as important as the product.” This philosophy emphasizes the growth and development of each student, rather than focusing solely on performances or placements.

Success is a journey – not a destination.

ATTITUDE

Students who bring a **positive** attitude, regardless of their individual skill level, will always have a place in the **Portage Northern Band Program**. On the other hand, if someone is unwilling to maintain a positive outlook or give their personal best to help the group succeed, this may not be the right organization for them. With the right attitude and perseverance, almost any challenge can be overcome.

Students who take pride in themselves usually project that pride through a positive mindset. Characteristics of a strong attitude include approaching rehearsals and performances with enthusiasm, cooperating in the preparation and care of equipment and facilities, and showing a willingness to do whatever is needed for the success of the group.

The ideal band member is one who consistently gives their best effort for the good of the ensemble.

REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE is crucial for the success of the band, as it ensures adequate preparation and participation. Participating in band rehearsals and performances is mandatory.

Excused absence **requests** need to be emailed to Mr. Mufarreh except for emergencies. In that case, please email the directors at your earliest convenience for an excused absence. Work and appointments should be scheduled around band activities, as they are not excused. Students are expected to arrive on time and prepared.

Excused absences include illness, pre-approved essential family events, and religious holidays.

Non-excused absences include things you can plan for in advance, like driving tests, vacations not submitted on time, or work, etc.

Excused absences must be approved by Mr. Mufarreh and submitted at least ***two weeks in advance***.

CONCERT SEASON PERFORMANCES

All Concert Season Performances are **REQUIRED** unless otherwise noted, Performances are equivalent to our unit assessments/exams. There is not substitute for a performance. In the case of an approved, excused absence, points can be earned for missed performances via a make-up assignment.

Make-Up Assignment: The makeup is only given for excused absences. Please email Mr. Mufarreh, and they will send you the needed information regarding the make-up assignment. The student must initiate this make-up time and complete the assignment within 3 days of the missed rehearsal/performance.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

To maintain a professional, unified appearance, all students are required to wear **concert black** at performances. Clothing must be modest and not draw attention to the individual.

Guidelines:

- Plain, solid black clothing (no patterns).
- Black dress pants/slacks or black dress/skirt (long to mid-calf). *No leggings, jeans, or sweatpants.*
- Black dress shirt/blouse with sleeves. *No T-shirts, short sleeves, or sleeveless tops.*
- Black socks or tights
- Black closed-toe dress shoes. *No sneakers, flip-flops, or open-toe shoes.*
- Minimal jewelry; no low-cut necklines, or midriffs
- Ties and jackets are *optional*, but encouraged

MUSIC LOCKERS

Each band student may use a music locker to store their instrument and music. Percussionists and color guard members may also use a locker for sticks, equipment, or music.

Please note:

- Lockers are available on a first-come, first-served basis and must be signed out using the posted QR code.
- Our school does not provide locks. Students may bring their own if desired, but lockers and their contents are ultimately left at the student's own risk.
- At the end of the year, all locks will be removed and any remaining items will be discarded.
- Only instruments, binders/folders, and water are permitted in lockers. No food or other beverages allowed.

PRACTICE ROOM POLICIES

- Only the student who reserved the room may use it—no guests.
- Rooms are for practicing music or IB Music projects only.
- No food; only closed water bottles.
- Unlock only your assigned room, and always lock it while inside.
- When leaving, close the door so it locks.
- If an ensemble needs the room, you must return to the seminar.
- Misuse may result in loss of practice room privileges.

CELL PHONES

Cell Phones must be put away for the entirety of rehearsal. Earbuds must be removed before entering the Band Room.

Office referrals/detentions will be issued for breaking the cell phone policy.

Portage Northern High School policy prohibits cell phone use between class bells.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons are a great way to push those excelling students even higher!! See this [list of Private Lesson teachers in our area](#)! You can also contact the Music Studio at Marshall Music at 269-321-0415 or Crescendo Academy of Music at <http://crescendoacademy.com> or call them at 269-345-6664.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- Be Prepared. Includes having all needed materials. (Listed in section below)
- Be in your seat and ready to play three minutes after the bell rings.
- Be responsible for your instrument and your music at all times. This responsibility also includes making sure that your instrument and other equipment used during class time and performances are put away properly!
- If you are having difficulty with your music, spend time outside of band class working on it. If you need help, please let us know, we would be more than happy to help! Every individual player makes a difference!
- Proper rehearsal etiquette. This includes being quiet, paying attention, not playing when you are not instructed to play, using appropriate posture while playing, following directions, and not disrupting others.
- Keep the room neat (instruments/music stored in cases and in your locker and locked)
- No food, gum, or drink is allowed in the band room (except water).
- No cell phones allowed in class. Earbuds must be removed before entering the room.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Instrument (either owned personally, rented or school-owned)
- A pencil & music binder (**BLACK BINDER**) with **Sheet Protectors**
- All Clarinets/Saxophones/Oboes/Bassoons – Need at least 3 reeds at all times
- All Trumpet, French Horn, Tuba, Euphonium – Need their own valve oil
- All Trombones – Need Slide cream (Super Slick) and a small spray water bottle
- Flutes – Need a handkerchief or other thin cloth to use in cleaning out instrument
- Percussion needs snare sticks, drum pad, and additional mallets as necessary

GRADING

- **Performances** = 40% of overall grade
 - Performances (*for all bands*) & evening rehearsals (*for marching band only*)
 - Performances are a very integral part of this course and as a result, demand everyone's participation. Performances are considered tests for the unit covered in each concert cycle, and are an opportunity for students to showcase their accomplishments to parents and the public on the musical selections.
 - Evening Marching Band rehearsals are considered an extension of the classroom. We are accommodating to athletes involved in current NHS sports, so please contact us at least 3 weeks in advance of a concert/rehearsal if there is a sports conflict, so we can work it out! ☺
- **Rehearsal Skills, Classwork & Engagement** = 60% of overall grade
 - Classwork includes all other assignments that are completed for a grade.
 - Playing Tests, Technique Requirements, Rhythm Master, Scales, Etc.
 - Students will earn a daily engagement grade if they are present and engaged in their class. Every person in this class is expected to make an individual and group effort to improve technically and musically. To participate to their full potential, students must be prepared with their instrument, binder, pencil, and anything else needed to perform.
 - Other ways to show engagement:
 - Be prepared for rehearsal with instrument, music, pencil, reeds, oil, etc.
 - Be ready to play when the director begins
 - Follow directions the first time they are given
 - Use appropriate posture, technique, and hand/instrument position at all times

WE EXPECT EACH STUDENT...

- will be prepared for class (i.e., Instrument, Music, pencil, ...)
- will participate as part of a team and not as individuals during class.
- will have an open mind for all styles of music studied in class.
- to learn more about music through playing an instrument in a large ensemble.
- to improve each student's ability on his/her instrument.
- to prepare themselves for the next level of musicianship.
- will *practice* their music to improve their contributions to the band. (Suggested practice time- 4 sessions per week for 30 minutes.)
- to attend all required performances throughout the year (Holiday, March & Spring Concerts, Memorial Parade & Graduation.)
- to feel *encouraged* to take private lessons. (See Private Instructor sheet)
- to *maintain proper behavior* and *be respectful* of the teacher and peers as well as the facilities and personal/school-owned equipment housed in the band room.