

August 27, 2026

Parents of Fifth Grade Band Members:

Greetings! We are really excited to get this year started with our **NEW** Beginning Band at Meridian. It will be amazing to watch how much progress the learners make in this first year of band. Parents, we hope you enjoy this as much as your child.

We want to inform you of some of the services offered at cost to you. We purchase reeds directly from local music stores at a school discount, and would like to offer that discount to you as well. We also purchase equipment such as valve oil, mouthpieces, neck straps, cork grease, music stands and cleaning kits for your child. The prices are as follows:

Clarinet Reeds: 3 for \$10
Alto Sax Reeds: 4 for \$15
Valve/Slide Oil: \$5.00
Cork Grease: \$3.00

We require the learners who play clarinet and saxophone to have **3** working reeds at all times. This allows your child to continue playing in class should a reed break during rehearsal. If one breaks, another should be purchased to replace the previous reed. WE USE VANDOREN REEDS. Some music stores sell Rico reeds, but these will not provide the strength necessary for your child to produce their best tone. If you wish to purchase a box of reeds at a time (10 reeds), clarinet/alto sax boxes are \$35. You can also find this brand of reed online for purchase. Please use Vandoren Reeds (2.5 strength). This is an excellent way to ensure your learner is prepared for class.

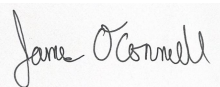
Please take the time to listen to your child play - it is a very rewarding experience. Remember, the goal is 10-15 minutes per day at the start of the year. By the end of the year your child should have built up enough endurance to play 20-25 minutes comfortably. Daily practice is essential to musical growth!

There will be many questions you will have this year. Please feel free to call or contact us by email. You may also use this number or our email to notify us if your child will be absent from class on a given day. Thank you for your support of our beginning program. We look forward to getting to know you over the next year and years to come.

Musically Yours,



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Curriculum for 5th Grade Band

Purpose: The purpose of this course is to expose learners to the skills and merits of participation in an instrumental music ensemble at a beginning level through large and small group instruction.

Objectives: Below are the objectives that the learners will be expected to meet during the first year of instruction:

1. An understanding of proper care, assembly and respect of his/her instrument
2. The ability to produce a characteristic tone across at least an 8 note range
3. Comprehension of rhythmic patterns visually and aurally and the skills to translate these patterns on his/her instrument and/or to count back orally
4. Basic sight reading skills of whole, half, dotted half, quarter, dotted quarter and eighth notes and rests in 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 time signatures
5. Development of musical vocabulary and the ability to speak, read and write using correct musical terminology
6. Strengthening of team and group work concepts and the ability to function and contribute in a large group setting

Materials: Learners use the *Accent on Achievement, Book 1* and sheet music to supplement instruction.

Instruction time: Learners at the fifth grade level meet 3 days a week. Woodwinds & Percussion will meet Monday and Wednesday. Brass will meet Tuesday and Thursday. All learners will meet for the entire class period on Fridays.

Grading: Each learner is assessed based on improvement towards completion of the objectives. The assessments include, but are not limited to written, listening and playing tests and completion of a weekly practice journal. Necessary components of grading in a band class include attendance and participation. Learners will receive a letter grade and an individual assessment sheet at the end of each semester.

Attendance: Regular attendance is critical. Missing several days of band will result in the learner falling behind, therefore causing the entire band to slow down as the absent child plays “catch-up”. We are available before/after school most days to help frequently absent (or struggling) students get back on track.

Homework: Daily practice is the assigned homework for band class. At the 5th grade level, it is necessary to practice 10-15 minutes daily. Practice can exceed this time frame, but does not need to. The most important factor is **regularity**, not time. Weekly assignments will be given, and each child will be expected to complete these assignments to the best of their playing abilities.

Enrollment in band: If a learner is struggling to achieve in the class, the teacher will discuss options with the child and the parent(s). If the child decides they no longer would like to be in band, a note from the parent(s) explaining why is needed. ***It is vital that he or she remains in the class the entire first year, giving the child the opportunity to fully experience all that we do in band. Often frustration is relieved after a few months of playing an instrument.***

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT JOINING BAND:

· HOW DOES MY CHILD SELECT AN INSTRUMENT?

Your child was fitted during school to an instrument by a representative from Marshall Music. Things considered in fitting a child to an instrument are:

- 1) Physical characteristics (i.e. a student with very small fingers might struggle with clarinet)
- 2) Student interest
- 3) Initial success on an instrument at the fitting time
- 4) Instrumentation needs (a band with 24 saxes & 18 percussionists wouldn't sound balanced)

· WHAT IF I HAVE AN INSTRUMENT AT HOME, OR FIND ONE ON THE INTERNET?

If you have an instrument at home and your child wishes to play it, it needs to be in good working condition. If it has not been played for several years, it should probably be cleaned and checked out. (Either Herter Music of Bay City or Marshall Music can do this.) I recommend waiting to buy an instrument off of the Internet until you are sure that particular instrument will work for your child. Many websites carry I.L.O.'s ("Instrument-Like-Objects). These instruments are made of parts and pieces that often cannot be repaired or replaced and result in purchasing another instrument rather than having it fixed. This short-term savings often results in paying nearly double what a modestly-priced quality instrument would cost. Many parents have opted to try the rental program through Marshall Music for an instrument (this is standard) and then found a "like new" QUALITY instrument on the internet at a later date. (Please let us know if you are looking for an instrument on the web. We are happy to offer input regarding brand names that are good investments vs. an instrument that cannot be repaired if it were to stop working. This is just something to consider...)

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT "BARGAIN" INSTRUMENTS PURCHASED ONLINE OFTEN BREAK WITHIN WEEKS OF PLAYING, AND CANNOT BE REPAIRED BY MUSIC COMPANIES! OFTEN THE GREAT PRICE CANNOT OVERCOME THE POOR QUALITY OF THE INSTRUMENT. MANY PARENTS HAVE STARTED THIS ROUTE, AND REALIZED THAT THEY WERE ACTUALLY SPENDING MORE ON THE INSTRUMENT THAN IF THEY HAD SPENT A LITTLE BIT MORE ON A QUALITY INSTRUMENT. PLEASE CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS!

Meridian Jr. High School

Band Syllabus (2026-2027)

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(989) 687-3300, ext. 3347

Prep 12:35-1:25 pm, M-F

Office: High School, Band Room



*The best way to reach us is **by email**. We do our best to respond **within 24 hours**.*

Teacher Availability

We are available to support learners on class work and additional out of class performance opportunities on a first come, first served basis Tuesdays and Thursdays (limited basis at the beginning of the school year) until 4 pm at the High School. Additional availability outside these days will be announced in advance during class. We would also be willing to work with learners by appointment when these days are not conducive to the learner's schedule.

Course Description

Jr. High School Band is a year-long curricular-based performance class for 5th-8th grade learners enrolled in the band program, which gives those involved the opportunity to cultivate and develop musical skills as well as the ability to work within both large and small groups. Required elements of the course include class rehearsal, scheduled sectionals and several after school performances, including, but not limited to: concert band festival, concerts, parades and performances at school athletic functions. Practicing outside of school is also a necessity for the learner to be successful in the program. Extra-curricular involvement in jazz band, solo and ensemble, private lessons and summer camps is also available to each learner.

Course Standards

This course covers content from the [National Standards for Music Education](#).

Course Objective

To instill an appreciation of music in all students, with special emphasis on music theory, proper performance techniques, sight reading, self-discipline, and positive personal character traits.

Classroom Goals

- 1) To strive toward the development of music appreciation and understanding through the study and performance of music.
- 2) Become interested and discriminating listeners and develop a strong, well-rounded background.

- 3) Contribute to selected school and community functions while promoting and enhancing the reputation of the school at all times.
- 4) To provide all interested students with an opportunity for a productive use of leisure time and positive social experiences.

Course Materials

All learners are expected to bring their instrument, music binder, music and a pencil to each rehearsal.

Online Gradebook

All grades for this course will be published in ECHO on a weekly basis. Parents and learners can access ECHO by contacting the school office.

Learners receive access to ECHO upon enrollment in school. If you do not yet have access to ECHO or are having trouble logging in, please contact our Technology Department, by phone at (989) 687-3298 or by email at: noah.kent@merps.org as soon as possible.

Chromebooks

School issued chromebooks will be used on occasion during the band period. Students may bring their devices to class to be used for these purposes.

Personal Electronic Devices

Learners may use personal electronic devices **ONLY** on designated days (per classroom signage) **IF** they are being used for the particular classroom activity (i.e. TonalEnergy tuning app, recording a playing assessment, etc.). All devices when not being used to record or tune must either remain in their locker, pocket, or in the designated classroom storage container. If devices are misused during class instruction time, the device will be placed in a container by the podium and can be collected at the end of the day in the Junior High office.

Homework

Learners will be asked to complete assignments outside of class instruction time. These assignments may be written or performance driven. Whether assigned for completion at home or in class, due dates are to be respected. Except for documented extenuating circumstances and extensions approved in advance, no late work will be accepted without prior approval.

Evaluation Criteria

All learners are evaluated using a variety of assessment methods (observations, in-class assignments, homework, quizzes, tests, performances, etc.) in each of the following categories.

Use of Letter and Percentage Grades

Letter and percentage grades will be reported to communicate cumulative course proficiency on ECHO, report cards, and transcripts per the learner handbook.

5th GRADE BAND

*** One (1) unexcused absence from a performance will result in a two-letter grade drop (i.e. A to C)**

Participation - 9 points weekly

Recordings - up to 6 per marking period

Performances - one per marking period

6th, 7th, & 8th GRADE BAND

*** One (1) unexcused absence from a performance will result in a two-letter grade drop (i.e. A to C)**

Assignments/Tests/Daily Work:

- Participation – 15 points (Music/Instrument/Behavior)
- Bi-weekly Music Check – 15 points possible

Absences and Tardies

Being fully present during every class is the MOST IMPORTANT step to every learner's success. Most forms of evaluation (class rehearsal, discussions, etc.) require learners to be present and cannot be made-up if absent or tardy.

If a learner is aware of a conflict with a performance, it is his/her responsibility to inform the director IN WRITING at least two weeks in advance of the performance or event. This note does not automatically excuse the learner from the performance.

Learners who are excessively absent or tardy will be referred to Learner Support to draft their plan to be more successful.

Class Norms

It is our belief that there is no such thing as “good enough”. Learners, as well as the facilitator should always be looking for ways to improve upon their previous best. Learners must understand that they will be held to a higher standard daily and that at no point will we settle for anything less than their best efforts.

Culture is important in my classroom as well. We believe in a family atmosphere, where all are accepted as they are, regardless of differences or shortcomings. The “family” nurtures one another and encourages all to strive for the most they can achieve.

IN ADDITION:

- * Instruments are to be kept in good playing condition. (School instruments are issued in good playing condition – it is the responsibility of the musician using the instrument to see that it stays in such condition. If the instrument needs repair while in the musician's care, it is the musician's personal and financial responsibility to have the instrument repaired.)
- * Students are not to play instruments belonging to other students without permission of the director and the owner of the instrument.
- * You are expected to improve your skills and knowledge of music daily.

* Instrument supplies, including reeds, oil, mouthpieces, ligatures, percussion sticks and mallets, and neckstraps are the responsibility of the student. Purchases and orders can be made through the band director with ***advance payment only!***

Food and Drink

Food, gum and drinks are not permitted in the band room, with the exception of water in a bottle that has a resealable top.

Musicianship

Attitude

The single greatest factor that will determine the success of any individual is attitude. It takes intense dedication to attain goals. Students should learn to discipline themselves to practice daily.

Discipline

A good band is built on discipline. Discipline is order. Because the band members are constantly on display, each must always be aware of the importance of good behavior. The student should remember that he/she represents his/her organization, school, and community, whenever he/she performs or appears publicly. Any misconduct casts a direct reflection on our school and community and may undo the good work of hundreds of loyal students.

Rights and Responsibilities

*** The Band Member's Responsibility to the Music Program**

- 1) Be regular in attendance and account for all absences.
- 2) Make an honest attempt to learn and improve daily.
- 3) Become responsible for your own actions.
- 4) Have the proper respect for those in authority.
- 5) Follow all classroom rules, school regulations, and all travel instructions.
- 6) Be honest and fair with others concerning equipment, music, and school life in general.
- 7) Cooperate with fellow band members and share with them the responsibilities and privileges that are part of the band program.
- 8) Contribute positively to your own music education and to that of others.
- 9) Read and play music with insight and expression.
- 10) Improve own knowledge and understanding of music theory, harmony, and history, and develop good listening habits.

*** The Responsibility of the Instrumental Music Department**

- 1) To provide band members with the proper kind of rehearsal room, seating, music stands, and instrument storage space.
- 2) Plan each day's activities and encourage daily practice of the entire band.
- 3) Provide the band with a full musical education through rehearsal, performance, teaching, testing, and listening.
- 4) Suspend any uncooperative member from the regular activities of the band program until a conference is held with the member, parents, and administration to work out an acceptable plan of improvement for the member. It is the

responsibility of the director to see that all members conform to school and band department policies.

5) Supervise students in the classroom or on school-sponsored band trips. Each student will receive information about any performance or trip well in advance of the event.

6) Evaluate every member of the band program as to his/her musical participation and citizenship.

Uniforms

Eighth Grade Band

The 8th Grade Band will be issued a school supplied band polo shirt to be worn for their December, February, and March concert performances. In addition to the polo shirt, each 8th grade student is responsible for the following items for their performance uniform:

- 1) Black pants
- 2) Black socks
- 3) Black shoes

Failure to wear the full uniform may result in the student being unable to perform with the bands, and the grade will be lowered as per the grading policy stated below. The shirt will be the student's personal uniform and will not need to be returned. If you need assistance finding the appropriate clothing for this uniform, please contact us a few weeks prior to the concert so that we have time to contact our resources.

Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Grade Bands

Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Grade Band members are expected to dress in nice clothing for their concerts. Please **NO** jeans, t-shirts, leisure wear, hoodies or hats. If you need assistance finding the appropriate clothing for this uniform, please contact the band department to utilize our resources.

Instruments

It is the policy of the Meridian Public School District to provide students (to the best of the district's ability) with instruments that could generally not afford to participate in band otherwise. Students using a school instrument (woodwinds/brass) are asked to make an **annual donation of \$20** to cover the costs associated with maintaining the instrument in good playing condition. This donation request *does not* apply to secondary instruments used in the fall for marching band.

Attendance Policy (all grades)

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at all rehearsals and performances. The grade for instrumental music is based a great deal on attendance at rehearsals and performances. Any student expecting to be absent from a performance must comply with regulations established in the school handbook. **If a student is aware of a conflict with a performance, it is his/her responsibility to inform the director IN WRITING at least two weeks in advance of the performance or event.** Students who chose to not attend a performance without prior excused consent will have their grade lowered by 2 letter grades for the marking period (i.e. A to C).

Absences due to illness or family emergency will be handled on a case by case basis. A note does not automatically excuse the student from the performance.

BAND EXPENSES:

5th Grade:

Woodwinds/Brass:

Band Book 1 - \$10

Percussion:

Band Book 1 - \$15

6th Grade:

Woodwinds/Brass:

Foundations For A Superior Performance Book - \$10

Reeds & Oils as needed

(must have 3 working reeds at all times, valve/slide oil for brass)

Percussion:

Foundations For A Superior Performance Book - \$15

Percussion Stick Bag - \$15

Timpani Mallets: Vic Firth T3 Staccato - \$43

Marimba Mallets: Balter 12B Yarn - \$42

7th Grade:

Woodwinds/Brass:

*Foundations For A Superior Performance Book - \$10

Percussion:

*Foundations For A Superior Performance Book - \$15

Xylophone Mallets: Innovative James Ross 902 - \$34

Vibraphone Mallets: Mike Balter Green Wound - \$40

8th Grade:

Woodwinds/Brass:

*Foundations For A Superior Performance Book - \$10

Marching Band Lyre/Flip Folder - \$15

Percussion:

*Foundations For A Superior Performance Book - \$15

Marching Band Lyre/Flip Folder - \$15

Bell Mallets: Mike Balter 10A Hard Phelonic - \$25

Additional Timpani Mallets: Vic Firth T1 General -\$43

ONLINE ACCEPTANCE AGREEMENT

2026-2027 BAND CALENDAR

see tabs on calendar for JH ONLY calendar

(also found on www.meridianbands.org)

Band Department

Revised 8/2026

** if purchased a previous year, this book can be reused - no additional purchase necessary*