



# Beginning Band

## Course Syllabus

**Location:** Middle School Band Hall

**Class Time:** 6th Period

**Faculty:** Mr. Dustin Bush & Mrs. Melanie Bush

**Department:** Fine Arts

**Email:** dbush@kennett.k12.mo.us; mbush@kennett.k12.mo.us

**Web:**  **Facebook:**  **Schedule:** 

## Course Description

This course gives students in grades 6th through 8th an opportunity to learn to play a wind or percussion instrument. Students will learn to read rhythmic and musical notation and develop strong musicianship through self-practice, group rehearsals, and concert performances. Students are required to attend all mandatory events. Additional opportunities for performance and self enrichment will be announced as information becomes available.

## Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete the course should:

1. Learn to read music.
2. Learn the appropriate notes and fingerings on their instrument.
3. Develop proper tone and posture.
4. Prepare and perform for peers and parents at concerts and other district events.
5. Develop strong sight-reading skills.
6. Develop leadership skills that will carry over into high school, college and the workplace.
7. Increase musical knowledge pertaining to music theory, world music, repertoire, music history, terminology, and individual instrument pedagogy.
8. Develop creativity that will impress future employers.
9. Develop a life-long love of music and the arts.
10. Have fun!

## Expectations

1. Come prepared for class daily (*including valve oil, reeds, cork grease, sticks, mallets, etc.*)
2. Recognize and be able to use music terminology.
3. Maintain both physical and mental progress musically.
4. Make up all work missed due to absences within a week (*includes excused absences*).
5. Students must take proper care of all instruments and make sure they are in good playing condition.
6. Keep all food and drink out of the band hall (*gum and candy included*).

## Required Materials

Each student must bring the following to band every day:

1. Book - *Habits of a Successful Beginner Band Musician*
2. Class Binder with handouts
3. Sheet Music — provided throughout the year
4. Pencil with a good eraser
5. Musical Instrument and related equipment (*reeds, oil, etc*)
6. Class folder
7. Music Folder
8. Concert Black Dress for Concerts and Performances (*see 'Concert Attire' below*)

Each student should also have the following at home for practicing:

9. Music Stand
10. Metronome (*may be available on a device*)
11. Tuner (*may be available on device*)

## Class Rules

Be RESPECTFUL to:

**Authority** - Listen and obey teachers, substitutes and administration. Raise your hand to speak.

**Peers** - Be kind, encouraging, and helpful to other students. Unkindness in any form is not tolerated.

**Self** - no negative self-talk. "I can't" is not allowed in Band. Take pride in your own performance, take the rehearsals seriously, and perform to the best of your ability always.

**Property** - be careful with the classroom, instruments, equipment, and music. Keep the classroom clean and tidy.

**Time** - be on time, turn in assignments on time, and be ready to go. Students must be in their seats and ready to rehearse three minutes after the bell rings.

**Nature** - be aware of how you can damage hearing and your body if improper techniques are used.

## Grading

Quarter Grades:

65% Tests — playing tests, written tests, concerts, and other events

35% Classwork— Sight-Reading Factory assignments, class participation points, and homework

Semester & Final Grades:

10% Semester Exams— The final concert of each semester will be held as a semester exam with the same expectations as any performance test grade.

Grades will be updated regularly on PowerSchool. Missing assignments will receive a '0.'

Students who do not pass the final content and skills test will be required to retake Beginning Band next year.

## Absence Procedure

Students are responsible for checking in with Mr. or Mrs. Bush to see what they missed when they have been absent from school. Students should practice the music we worked on during the absence at home or after school. Parents are responsible for notifying the directors, in writing, if they will miss any of the scheduled performances well before the event occurs. Students will be excused from performances according to district attendance policies.

## Concert Attire

Concert attire will be all black dress clothing that meets the dress code of Kennett School District #39. ***This includes solid black shoes, tall black socks, shirt, long pants, skirt, or dress.*** Please keep in mind that students will be seated while playing when choosing skirt or dress length. Skirts or dresses should rest mid-shin while seated. Students should avoid wearing any clothing, jewelry, or accessories that distract from the uniform look of the band.

## Concerts & Performances

Concerts & performances **are required** to fulfill state and national standards and constitute a majority of the grade.

- Christmas Concert, *December 8, 2026*
- Spring Concert, *April 6, 2027 (tentative)*
- Spring Assessment, *April/May 2027 TBD*
- MSSBDA Assessment, *TBD (tentative)*
- Spring Pep Rally, *TBA during the school day*

*Beginning Band does NOT march in parades. 2-4 students may be chosen by random drawing to carry the banners for the Middle and High School Marching Bands.*

Additional events may be required and will be announced as information becomes available. If dates above change, we will communicate that via letters home and in Google Classroom.

## Instrument Fittings

During the first weeks of school, Mr. and Mrs. Bush will conduct assessments and instrument fittings for all beginning band students. Directors will work with students to select an instrument based on the student's top choices and testing results. Students and families will then decide if they will be renting or purchasing their instrument.

*If finances are an issue, please notify Mr. or Mrs. Bush as the school owns a few of each instrument to loan.*

***Every student, regardless of financial status, has a place in the Kennett Band Family.***

If a band is to sound awesome, it must have a balance of instruments. As students develop musically and physically, the band directors may ask students to move to special testing instruments later in the year, or for their second year in band.

## Instrument Rental

Students may rent an instrument from Ernie Williamson Music or other retailers for the entire year. They may also purchase their own. The school has a limited stock of instruments in playable condition to loan. Please email the band directors to inquire about availability if you are unable to obtain an instrument this year.

**Note:** If you are considering purchasing a new instrument, and you are not knowledgeable about instruments, especially which brands are good in quality, please email Mr. or Mrs. Bush! Be wary of purchasing an instrument online, as often the instruments sold online are not what they seem or are low-quality instruments.

Instruments played in Beginning Band include flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet/cornet, horn, trombone, baritone/euphonium, and percussion. Students may request special testing for oboe, bass clarinet, bassoon, tenor or baritone saxophone, or tuba if they have at least one year of prior instrumental instruction (including piano).

Students wishing to play percussion must audition, and will be expected to learn drums, mallet instruments, and auxiliary instruments.

## Instrument Storage

We have shelving in room 301 for students to store their instruments during the day, however, students should be taking them home daily to practice.

## At-Home Practice

Students are most successful when given the opportunity to practice freely at home. Kennett band students are expected to practice on their own for at least 15-20 minutes daily once they are allowed to take their instruments home. Ideally, practice should look like this:

1. 5 minutes of long tones and/or buzzing
2. 10 minutes working on class music or exercises
3. 5 - 10 minutes of experimenting or playing anything they wish just for fun

Parents are expected to be supportive and should refrain from making any negative comments about the student musician. Early sounds aren't always pleasant to the ear, but are necessary to find the correct fingers or position on the instrument, form the correct embouchure, and use the correct amount of breath support. The more the student is allowed to practice on their own at home, the sooner their sound will improve.

## Eligibility

Students must meet guidelines for eligibility set by the Missouri High School Activities Association. Details can be found at [www.mshsaa.org/Activities/Eligibility/EligibilityStandards.aspx](http://www.mshsaa.org/Activities/Eligibility/EligibilityStandards.aspx)

## Kennett Band Family Values

We challenged our Varsity Band (*high school students*) to come up with a list of vital values they want to leave behind for the Kennett Band Program. We call these our Kennett Band Family Values. We work daily to start instilling these values in our students from day one each year. You can find out more about these values on our website. QR code is provided above.

**Respect — Discipline — Engagement — Musical Excellence — Camaraderie**

## Beginning Band Course Syllabus Acknowledgement

By signing on the next page, I acknowledge that I have read and reviewed all of the 2024-2025 band policies. I understand the expectations that are to be upheld by the band members and will encourage my students to abide by the rules set in place and to fulfill their obligations to the band. I know that by signing this form I have agreed to uphold these policies and have accepted the responsibility to attend all performances and activities in which the band participates regardless if these events are scheduled during or outside of the normal school day or on weekends. I agree to regularly check the posted schedule for updates and changes.

I recognize that each member of the band is vital and contributes greatly to the success of the program.

*Please sign and have your new musician return this during the first week of classes.*

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*Parents/guardians, please sign to acknowledge that you have read and understand the information provided in this Beginning Band Syllabus.*

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Printed Name of Band Member

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Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date