



2024–2025 Jazz Handbook

Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Band

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www.nnhsbands.org/jazz

(under construction – will be updated soon)

*District 203 Vision Statement
Building a Passion for Lifelong Learning*

The school district's mission is to graduate students who think critically, solve problems, make decisions, and have the skills necessary for productive citizenship and lifelong learning by providing excellent, comprehensive programs and services in partnership with the community.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The NNHS Jazz Program has received local, state, and national recognition, including awards at local festivals and performances at the Illinois Music Educators Conference, Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington Festival in NYC, the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, the Naperville Jazz Fest, and at the historic Jazz Showcase in Chicago.

The program currently consists of two big bands – Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Band.

Jazz Ensemble is the highest level jazz ensemble at NNHS. Participation is by audition and is typically made up of mostly sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Performances include but are not limited to events in the community and at various festivals. Instrumentation is limited to a standard big band instrumentation – saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass, and drum set. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis depending on what instrumentation the repertoire calls for. Jazz Ensemble rehearses Monday evenings from 5:30pm-7:30pm & Thursdays before school from 7:00am-7:35am. On weeks when school is closed on Monday, Jazz Ensemble will rehearse on Wednesday from 3:30pm-5:20pm.

Jazz Band is the second of two auditioned jazz groups at NNHS. Jazz Band is a fantastic opportunity for students to listen, speak, and learn to play the jazz language at a high level. Almost all Jazz Ensemble participants were once Jazz Band members. Participation is by audition and open to all grades. This group performs at many of the same venues and festivals as the Jazz Ensemble. Instrumentation is limited to saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass, and drum set. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis depending on what instrumentation the repertoire calls for. Jazz Band rehearses Wednesday evenings from 5:30pm-7:30pm..

AUDITIONS

Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Band require an audition. Auditions will typically be held early to mid October so rehearsals can begin as Marching Band season ends. Ensemble placements are made based on audition results.

COMMITMENT

Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Band are group endeavors. Ensembles achieve musical successes through the collective efforts of their members. In a Jazz band, there is usually only 1 person playing each part. As such, each and every member of the ensemble is crucial to the success of the overall ensemble and the group cannot successfully achieve its goals without a complete commitment to excellence from each member.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at ALL rehearsals and performances is expected. If a student knows they will be absent from a rehearsal it is their responsibility to communicate with the directors as soon as possible – this expectation applies to all students involved with the NNHS Jazz Bands. Communication needs to be clear and specific as to the nature of the absence - each instance will be taken on a case by case basis. Lack of attendance to rehearsals, especially rehearsals the week of a performance, will ultimately impact whether or not a student will be allowed to perform. An absence from a dress rehearsal will result in not being able to perform in the performance.

Three (3) rehearsal absences will result in an attendance meeting and potential removal from Jazz Ensemble or Jazz Band.

If you are involved in another extra-curricular activity or sport that has semi-frequent conflicts with the Jazz schedule, this must be discussed with your director at the time of auditions and/or as soon as the time conflict arises. You must work out an absence plan for conflicting extra-curricular activities *well in advance*. In general, this can easily be resolved and planned around as long as you communicate with the directors and the coach/sponsor of the conflicting activity.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

If you have any questions about attire please ask a director for clarification but generally speaking, whether on-site or off-site, jazz performance attire consists of the following:

- Dark suit or sport coat with a tie
- Dressy top with dark slacks or skirt
- Nice dress
- Nice closed toe dress shoes

PERFORMANCES & EVENTS

Below is the list of events and performances for both jazz ensemble and jazz band. More information and times will be announced closer to each performance. Calendar and information on the website will be updated soon.

Saturday January 18 or 25 Saturday February 8, 2025 Wednesday March 19, 2025 Thursday May 1, 2025	Pre-Festival Clinic (Tentative - Times TBD) Evanston Township HS Jazz Festival Naperville North HS (NPAC) Naperville North HS (NPAC)	Jazz Ensemble & Band Jazz Ensemble & Band Jazz Ensemble & Band Jazz Ensemble & Band
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MUSIC

You are assigned a folder and given sheet music throughout the year. In general, you are the *only* one playing your part and there are no extra copies of any parts. You will be charged a replacement fee If sheet music or your folder is lost or damaged.

LEARNING JAZZ & PRIVATE LESSONS

Jazz is an aural art form. The style is best learned through focused listening to as much jazz as you can. Learning to improvise is a skill that needs to be practiced in order to develop - if you want to be able to improvise well, there are a few things you can do to get better:

1. Take private lessons with a jazz teacher
2. Transcribe and learn jazz solos by ear (ask for recommendations)
3. Spend time practicing jazz improvisation
4. Take advantage of learning opportunities to practice improvisation in jazz rehearsals

iREAL PRO

There are many tools to practice improvising - many common jazz songs have play-along tracks on YouTube, etc. One fantastic tool available for very cheap is an app called iReal Pro. This app simulates a real-sounding band that can accompany you as you practice and has 1000s of common jazz songs preloaded, and you can create your own easily for any that aren't. For rhythm section players, you can turn on or off any rhythm section instrument so you can play along. This is an essential practicing tool!

TONAL ENERGY

Tonal Energy is a versatile music practice app designed to help musicians of all levels improve their skills. It features a highly accurate tuner, an advanced metronome, and a multi-pitch drone generator, making it ideal for developing intonation, rhythm, and ear training. The app also includes an audio recording feature, visual feedback tools like a spectrum analyzer, and customizable settings for various instruments. With its user-friendly interface and engaging features, Tonal Energy is particularly useful for young music students, providing them with a comprehensive toolkit to enhance their practice sessions and overall musicianship.

PLEASE PRINT AND SIGN THE 2024-25 NNHS
JAZZ HANDBOOK AGREEMENT &
ACTIVITY FEE FORM

(Click to open)