



THE
Forest Middle School
Bands

Practice with purpose.

Perform with passion.

Chris Satterfield
Director of Bands

Jennifer Wilson
Band Director

2025-2026 Handbook & Syllabus



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Welcome

Welcome to the Forest Middle School Band Program! It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that we introduce our band program to you in a more detailed manner. The FMS band program has established a wonderful tradition of excellence and we are glad you have chosen to be a part of it.

Your child's participation in our band program is beneficial in many ways. Band students are engaged daily in a highly creative performing art that stimulates growth in areas of the human brain that no other discipline can. This growth effortlessly transfers into your student's academic life. In addition, our band students will develop traits such as teamwork, responsibility, dedication, self-discipline, social skills, confidence, leadership, and dependability. Membership in our band program will give all a sense of accomplishment, pride, and respect as the students develop musical and personal skills that will enrich their lives.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the guidelines and expectations for making this year a success for all involved, and to serve as a guide and resource for students and parents. Both students and their parents should take the time to thoroughly read this handbook. Upon completion, the contract that was distributed to your student during class (or downloaded from our web site) should be signed and returned to school, indicating your understanding of these guidelines and expectations.

Enrolling in band is a full year course, and students who enroll are expected to commit for the full academic school year.

Contact Information

The directors encourage positive communication and are willing to discuss any aspect of a student's progress in band with his/her parents. The best and fastest way to communicate with a director is through email.

Chris Satterfield
csatterfield@bedford.k12.va.us

Jennifer Wilson
jwilson@bedford.k12.va.us

Please understand that our communication to you – the parents – is a very high priority for us. We want to take care of concerns and make every situation the best for each student. Please contact us for clarification on any concerns before they become major issues. Therefore it is very important that we have a valid email address for every parent/guardian of a student in the band program. We will send out information through Canvas and PowerSchool.

Throughout the year, we will be sending quite a bit of information home in the form of emails. Please make every effort to read this information carefully, check calendars often and keep us informed of any conflicts. The sooner we know of a situation, the more options we have in solving problems. **We will also utilize our canvas class pages for announcements and information. We strongly encourage you to be an observer on your child's page.**

Conduct Expectations

Band members will observe all procedures set forth by Forest Middle School and BCPS, in addition to the following, as they pertain to the instrumental music setting:

- Any behavior which is not representative of good citizenship, as perceived by the band directors, may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand as well as the band program. This also applies to the actions of students in both public and private events.
- All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines of proper rehearsal etiquette as defined below.

Expectations for Rehearsal Etiquette

- Students will follow directors' instructions.
- Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area with all necessary equipment at the beginning of rehearsal time. This will be defined as 3 minutes after the tardy bell rings.
- Students will keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- Students will not use or play on equipment they do not own without permission from a director.
- Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
- Students should request permission to speak by raising their hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be extremely quiet so that time will be utilized as wisely and efficiently as possible.
- When allowed in the band hall, either before or after school, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress.
- Students will respect the property of others and return their equipment to its proper storage place when not in use. Students should keep their equipment in the designated storage area and keep said storage area clean and neat in appearance. Students who have difficulty with this may lose the privilege of having a storage area in the band hall.
- Students will not deface or mark on music stands, chairs, walls, etc.
- Students will utilize their assigned storage slot/locker for instrument cases during rehearsals. Cases should not be brought into rehearsals unless requested by a director (exceptions: flute, clarinet, and oboe).

The FMS Bands

8th Grade Symphonic Band

The Eighth Grade Symphonic Band is designed to provide students with an advanced experience on band instruments. Curriculum for this course is an extension of the skills and concepts introduced in the seventh grade band. This band is open to eighth grade students selected by audition who have successfully completed seventh grade band.

7th Grade Concert Band

The Seventh Grade Band is designed to provide students with an intermediate experience on band instruments. Curriculum for this course is an extension of the skills and concepts introduced in Sixth Grade Band. Seventh Grade Band is open to all seventh Grade students who have successfully completed Sixth Grade Band.

6th Grade Concert Band

The Sixth Grade Band is designed to provide students with an introductory experience on band instruments. Sixth grade is the first time students in the Bedford County Public School System can elect to take a band ensemble class. Curriculum for this course is an extension of the skills and concepts introduced in General Music classes in the elementary school feeders. Beginning Band is open to all Sixth Grade students. Prior instrumental music experience is not required. Recruiting and enrollment registration occur in the January of the Fifth Grade year.

Cavalier Jazz Ensemble

The Cavalier Jazz Ensemble meets after school on Thursdays from 4-5:30 in the FMS band room. This is an extracurricular ensemble and is not graded. The jazz ensemble is open to all band students in 7th or 8th grade. 6th grade students may be admitted if they are proficient on a specialty instrument such as piano, bass, or guitar.

Care of Facilities/Instruments & Equipment

Facilities

- **No gum, food, or drinks are allowed in the band rooms** except when authorized by the directors.
- Leave all backpacks, water bottles, and metal drink cups outside the band room in the hallway
- All trash is to be deposited in the wastebaskets provided
- Acts of vandalism or the willful misuse of school property will be dealt with severely and appropriately. Every band member is responsible to help the directors monitor the facility and control vandalism.
- Music stands are designed to hold music, not bodies. Do not lean on, spin, or use a music stand for any purpose other than holding your music binder
- Students must ask permission to leave the classroom

Instruments/Equipment

- Students should never touch an instrument that is not their own unless given specific permission from a director
- Directors will explain proper instrument care and maintenance for each instrument. It is then the individual responsibility of each student to maintain his/her instrument. Students should not fidget with instruments or take an instrument apart. This often results in an instrument not performing properly.
- In the event a rental instrument needs to be sent in for a repair, the student should fill out an Instrument Repair card, place the card in the instrument case and leave it with the director. Star City Music comes to FMS on Tuesday mornings and Hill City Music comes on Fridays. There may be a school instrument a student can borrow while their instrument gets repaired.

- All instrument cases should be labeled with the student's name and grade. Many instrument cases look exactly alike.
- The students may bring their instruments to the band room before school starts and retrieve it when they are dismissed to go home for the day. Other than rehearsal time, a student's instrument and music binder should remain in the student's instrument storage locker. Students are welcome to bring a lock to secure the instrument storage locker, but if they do, they must give the director the combination or an extra key. If this is not done, the only response to the student forgetting the combination or losing the key, is to have the lock cut off of the locker.

School owned Instruments

FMS has a limited number of school owned instruments for use. All performance based percussion, Tubas, Bassoon, Bass Clarinets, French Horns, Tenor Saxes, Bari Saxes, Keyboards & Amps, Electric Bass & Amp are supplied by the band. If you are playing Baritone we ask that you rent a Baritone to keep at home and use a school instrument in class. You would just need to bring your mouthpiece back and forth. French Horns and Tenor Saxes are welcome to do the same thing if you desire. If Tuba players wish to have a Tuba at home, you too would need to rent one to stay at home and use a school owned Tuba in class. Again, bringing your mouthpiece back and forth each day. Percussionists should rent a percussion kit (snare drum & bell set) to practice on at home.

We have a small number of other instruments for students to use in the event their instrument has to be sent in for repair.

Rental Instruments

All students should have made arrangements for renting an instrument by Friday, August 16th. If you have your instrument already, bring it on day 2 of school. It is very important that we get started right away so that if any changes in instrumentation have to be made, we do so in the first week of school. This is uncommon - most students are able to keep their chosen instrument. However, every now and then we have a student that just cannot make a sound on a specific instrument. We can always find one that will be a successful fit. We want every student to succeed.

Attendance

Excused Absence

Absences during the school day will be excused according to district guidelines. **Absences from activities held outside the school day will be excused at the discretion of the directors.** Appointments, tutorials etc. are **not excuses for absence.** Absences due to personal illness requiring medical attention, death in the family, or other extenuating circumstances (approved by director) may be considered for excused status. Students who are continually ill may be required to provide a doctor's note releasing them from participation. Absences should be discussed with a director to determine whether or not they will be excused. **Some excused absences may still result in removal from a concert performance, contest or trip.**

Unexcused Absence

Students with an unexcused absence from any required band activity will receive a zero in the grade book. Rehearsals, concerts, contests, and competitions cannot be made up. Absences should be discussed with a director to determine whether or not they will be excused or unexcused.

Concerts/Performances/Mass Rehearsals

Concerts and performances are an integral component of the band curriculum. Students should consult their band calendars for dates and times. Each of the concert ensembles will perform at various times throughout the school year and these performances are **mandatory**. In addition, leading up to the concert/performance, the ensemble will have mass rehearsals. These are rehearsals where the entire band rehearses at the same time, like a dress rehearsal for the upcoming performance. These rehearsals are extremely important given that the band classes meet at separate times each day. These mass rehearsals are the only opportunities we have to rehearse as a full ensemble before a public performance. These are generally the last three rehearsals before a performance. These rehearsals take place during the school day, but may require a student to miss another class in order to be in attendance. Often we are able to let the student make-up the work from the class missed during their regularly scheduled band class. Periodically, the schedule may change, and updates will be communicated. Concerts are considered to have three parts: warm-up, performance, and listening. For the student, the concert begins at the warm-up. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes after the last group has performed, all equipment and instruments have been returned to the band room, and the directors give permission for students to be dismissed. A general report time will be given for all students. If a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible to make up all missed work. Students are generally allowed to make up this work during their normally scheduled band class. Please put these concerts on your calendar now. This will help avoid a “conflict” with another activity later.

Making up assignments/assessments for an Excused absence

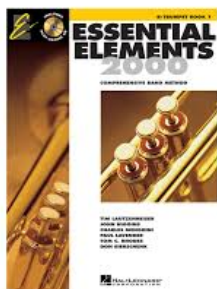
Students have 3 days to complete make-up work from an excused absence. After that, the student will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment/assessment.

Daily Supplies

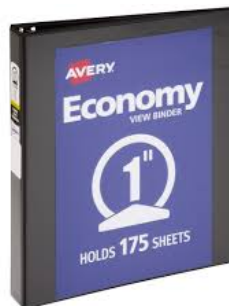
6th Grade Band Students

Basic materials

Technique Book



Binder & Page Protectors



Pencil



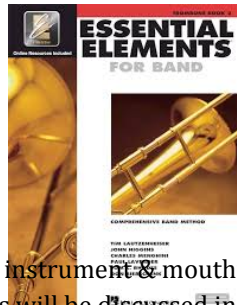
All students also need an instrument & mouthpiece in good working order.
Specific instrument needs will be discussed in class and a list will be posted on Canvas.

7th Grade Band Students

Basic materials

Pencil

Technique Book



Binder & Page Protectors



All students also need an instrument & mouthpiece in good working order.
Specific instrument needs will be discussed in class and a list will be posted on Canvas.
Percussionists will be given a list of sticks/mallets they need in class and the list will be posted on Canvas.

8th Grade Band Students

Basic materials

Pencil

Binder & Page Protector



All students also need an instrument & mouthpiece in good working order.
Specific instrument needs will be discussed in class and a list will be posted on Canvas.
Percussionists will be given a list of sticks/mallets they need in class and the list will be posted on Canvas.

Grading Guidelines

Formative Grades (40%)

- Daily Participation - Includes Instrument, Music Binder (with all required materials), Pencil, Teachable Attitude and Participation in class
- Individual playing in class
- Theory exercises

Summative Grades (60%)

- Performance Assessments (announced in advance on Canvas)
- Concerts and Mass Rehearsals - Includes all assigned classroom performance assessments, mass rehearsal attendance and participation, concert attendance, and performances. Students will be graded on supplies, punctuality, and concert dress.
- Theory Assessments (announced in advance on Canvas)

The following list is provided to give students and parents examples of items that may be subject to grading. Additional assignments may be given at the discretion of the director.

- The student will be on task and focused during rehearsals.
- The students will have their instrument, music, pencil, and supplies in rehearsals.
- The student will be prepared to play his/her part successfully.
- The student will mark music and take notes as needed.
- The student will be expected to improve individual music skills.
- The student's individual skill development will be evaluated through recorded music tests, individual playing tests, scale tests, and/or written tests.
- The student will be evaluated on improvement of ensemble skills during daily rehearsals.
- The student will be expected to improve his/her performance fundamentals.
- The student will be evaluated for improvement of his/her music fundamentals through daily observation during the "basics and/or warm-up" part of each rehearsal and during sectionals.
- The student will be expected to demonstrate correct posture, hand position, embouchure, air production, and articulation as monitored during rehearsals.
- The student will receive a grade for each performance during a grading period.

It is possible to fail band, but you have to work at it. Not turning in an assessment results in a grade of 0 and will drastically affect your grade. Turn in ALL assessments and honor your commitment to the group by being at all concerts.

Remediation/Extra Help

We do not require practice records initially. However, if we feel a student is struggling to master certain skills or is falling behind the class, we will ask that student to submit a practice record as a means to understand how we can best help the student.

Weekly practice records (if required)

(Please note, MS. Wilson requires practice records for her 6th grade classes)

Due every Monday or the first day back to school (vacation or sick)

50 minutes of practice time per week is required

Must be signed by parent/guardian

Practice records may be submitted 1 day late with a 11 point off penalty

Practice records will not be accepted or given credit if they are more than 1 day late

Private Lessons

Practice Expectations

It should be understood that practice is needed to become proficient when learning and developing any new skill. We do not require practice records, but individual assessments will reflect if a student is mastering the skills and concepts that are taught each day. **Every student is expected to practice enough to demonstrate improvement throughout the week and mastery of the performance assessments.** Band is a very unique class where progressing affects everyone else in the class. For the ensemble to succeed, each student must be contributing. If sufficient mastery of assessments is not achieved, practice records may be required to help the student get on track.

Instrument Storage and Identification

Students will be assigned a locker in the band room for instrument storage. Every instrument should have the student's name clearly displayed on the outside of the case. Students should store their instrument and binder in their locker during the school day. Students may bring their instrument to the band room upon arrival at school and return to the band room to pick it up at the end of the day. Students may bring a lock to place on the band locker, but this is not required. If they choose to bring a lock to secure their instrument, we ask that you give the combination or an extra key to a band director. If a student forgets their combination or loses their key, the only option is to have the lock cut off.

All instruments **MUST** have a name tag. This is for the safety of your child's instrument. FMS and BCPS are not responsible for identified or unidentified instruments that are stolen due to lockers being unlocked or name tags missing.

Concert/Performance Attire Guidelines

All students should dress in solid black or white tops and black bottoms. Ladies may wear a dress or pants. Everyone should wear **solid black** dress shoes. Gentlemen should wear solid black, calf length socks. No tee shirts, sneakers, or flip-flops. BCPS school dress code policies apply at all times.

Student Leadership

Mr. Satterfield will have student leaders in each class. Students may audition and/or apply for both selected officer positions and elected officer positions. In this manner, students can serve their band program and refine skills which they will be able to use in other school organizations, as well as in their future careers. Audition criterion is selected at the discretion of the directors and is communicated to the students. The directors evaluate all selected officer candidates based on their performance both during the audition and throughout the school year. At all times, student leaders are expected to be positive role models for all band members.

The positions are:

- Librarian (responsible for making copies of music and distributing it to the class)
- Rehearsal leader (responsible for leading the class in a rehearsal with the use of a metronome or accompaniment tracks)
- Logistics & Loading Crew (responsible for organizing classroom set-up and tear down, set-up and tear down of concerts, and loading/unloading logistics of bus travel)

Training will be provided to the selected students. Applications/auditions for these positions will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Participation in JFHS Band Activities

For any band student that participates in any JFHS band activity (ie. Marching Band, Indoor Drumline, Winter Guard), any FMS band activity takes precedent for attendance. Students are responsible for recognizing conflicts and informing all directors. All directors have spoken and set this policy, so that the students can maximize their participation in all ensembles.

Concerts/Performances 2025-2026

Fall Concert

October 28, 2025

7th Grade Band & 8th Grade Band

Holiday Concerts

Concert #1

December 4, 2025

7th Grade Band & FMS Cavalier Jazz Ensemble

Concert #2

December 11, 2025

6th Grade Band & 8th Grade Band

Pre-Assessment Concert

February 26, 2026

7th Grade Band & 8th Grade Band

VBODA Concert Assessment

March 10, 11, 12 or 13, 2026 (Time TBA)

Assessment is offered at two different sites. Once transportation has been worked out, the site and day will be announced.

7th Grade Band & 8th Grade Band

Spring Concerts

Concert #1

May 14, 2026

6th Grade Band & 8th Grade Band

Concert #2

May 19, 2026

7th Grade Band & FMS Cavalier Jazz Ensemble

There may be other performances added as requests from the community come in during the school year. These dates will be added to the Canvas page and an announcement will be added to alert everyone.

Spring music competition dates are being explored and will be announced via Canvas. These trips will involve only the 7th grade band, 8th grade band, and possibly the Jazz Ensemble.

Concerts held at FMS start at 7:00 pm and the call time for students is 6:30 pm, unless otherwise noted. Students should be in their seats in appropriate concert attire for warm-up.

VBODA Concert Assessment/ Music Competitions

Concert Performance Assessment is a State-wide event for ensembles to perform while being adjudicated. It is our state testing--but instead of taking a written test, we are asked to perform for a panel of professional adjudicators. In addition to being judged on a full concert of three pieces, they put their musical knowledge, teamwork, and problem solving skills to the test by playing a piece of music they have never seen before. This is known as sight reading.

Ensembles are judged by professional musicians on skills such as technique, rhythmic accuracy, balance, and musicality as well as on their ability to read, learn, and perform new music. Each skill is given an individual grade, A through F, and averaged to determine a score from each of four judges. These overall scores are again averaged to determine overall scores ranging I to V.

Adjudicated assessments are a vital curriculum component for most middle school and high school instrumental ensembles. These assessments can improve performance levels, promote pride within the group, enhance morale, and provide directors and students with feedback for performance-specific improvement and growth. In many schools, assessment results provide accurate pictures of a program's progress and development. Ratings may serve this purpose because ratings—similar to standardized tests—provide a third-party evaluation consisting of scores that compare the achievement of one ensemble to another.

Travel Guidelines/Criteria

The band will occasionally travel on either school buses or commercial buses. Students are expected to conduct themselves at the highest level on any trip. Students who have been subject to school-level discipline in the course of the school year may be deemed ineligible to participate in field trips, at the discretion of the director and/or campus administration. If a student wishes to ride home from an event with a parent, we must have a signed note from the parent BEFORE we depart FMS for the trip.

Students must have a parent permission form completed and on file with the band office to travel on any trip with the band.

While on the bus students will:

- Remain seated at all times.
- Sit properly in a forward position.
- Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris.
- Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- Use only approved type/headset radios (no audible speakers).
- Remain silent when addressed by an adult on the bus.
- Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, singing, screaming, whistling, inappropriate jokes, etc.
- No public displays of affection.

Special Note

As a member of the band, you are a representative of your school. Always be on your best behavior. If you are in doubt about an action, do not do it! Your conduct at all times should be considered a good reflection on the school, the band, your home, yourself, and the community.

All-District Band/Junior Regional Orchestra

What is an All-District Band?

If your child is in 7th or 8th grade band, they have the opportunity to represent Forest Middle School and Bedford County in this two day event. Auditions for the band will be held on Saturday, January 10th, 2026 at Lord Botetourt High School in Daleville, VA (near Roanoke). We will take a school bus to the auditions on January 10th. There is a small audition fee required to audition (usually around \$8). Band students from throughout the county audition to be a part of this all-star ensemble. The following is a typical list of participating middle schools in District VI:

Altavista Combined School	James Breckinridge Middle
Andrew Lewis Middle School	Laurel Park Middle School
Auburn Middle School	Liberty Christian Academy
Benjamin Franklin Middle School	Liberty Middle School
Blacksburg Middle School	Linkhorne Middle School
Brookville Middle School	North Cross School
Cave Spring Middle School	Northside Middle School
Central Academy Middle School	O.T. Bonner Middle School
Christiansburg Middle School	Read Mountain Middle School
Covington Middle School	Sandusky Middle School
Dunbar Middle School	Shawsville Middle School
Fieldale-Collinsville Middle School	Staunton River Middle School
Floyd County High School	Westwood Middle School
Forest Middle School	William Byrd Middle School
Glenvar Middle School	William Campbell Middle School
Halifax County Middle School	Woodrow Wilson Middle School
Hidden Valley Middle School	Westover Christian Academy
James Madison Middle	

Students will audition for a panel of judges in January and, if selected, will perform with the All-District Band on February 20-21st at E.C. Glass High School. Transportation arrangements will be announced in the itinerary for the event.. Students are responsible to provide their own way home following the All District concert. This is something students must begin preparing for early in the school year in order to be prepared for the audition in January. A list of specific requirements will be made available to the students in October 2025. It is a very high honor to be a member of this group.

This is one of many opportunities for students to learn valuable life skills through the study of music. Preparing for an audition is much like preparing for a job interview or college admittance interview. The more students go through this process, the more comfortable they become at it. In addition, making an honors band in middle and high school looks very good on college or job resumes. Audition packets will be available from Mr. Satterfield and Ms. Wilson.

We encourage **all** 7th and 8th grade band students to pursue this wonderful opportunity.

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

In order for the band to travel and perform for the public, we must have parents volunteer to chaperone. If you would like to volunteer, please fill out the Google Form below. Travel dates and times are still being determined at this time. Once they are finalized, there will be an announcement on our Canvas pages.

Opportunities to serve as a chaperone:

- All-District Band auditions (7th & 8th Grade students) January 10, 2026
- All-District Band event (7th & 8th Grade students) February 20-21, 2026
- Junior Regional Orchestra auditions (Students who play stringed instruments) January 24, 2026
- Junior Regional Orchestra event (Students who play stringed instruments) March 13-14, 2026
- Kings Dominion Trip (7th and 8th Grade Bands) May 2026 TBD
- Cavalier Jazz Ensemble community performances (Jazz Ensemble students) TBD

Other opportunities

Jefferson-Forest Band Booster Association

The FMS Band program has a member that serves on the Executive Committee of the JFBB. Our current Middle School At-Large Representative is Mrs. Leigh Dever. There are places on the Chaperone & Volunteer form to express your desire to volunteer. Thank you for considering this service to the band program.

Parent Student Signature/Agreement

You will be turning in the form for the FMS Band Handbook & Syllabus ONLINE this year!

The following form(s), need to be ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED and RETURNED, BY ALL BAND FAMILIES by **August 20, 2025**.

If *the handbook & syllabus agreement form* is received, the grade will be 100%! The handbook & syllabus acknowledgement form will lose 11 points if submitted late. All students MUST submit the acknowledgement form in order to continue participation in the band program.

[2025-2026 FMS Handbook & Syllabus Agreement Form](#)

[2025-2026 Chaperone & Volunteer Form](#)

FMS Band website: [FMS Bands](#)

<https://sites.google.com/bedford.k12.va.us/fmsbands/home>



FMS Band on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fmsbands>



FMS Band on Instagram: @fmsbands