
Creekwood Middle School



2026 - 2027 Band Handbook

Adam Davis, Director of Bands
Madison Douzat, Associate Director
Stacey Blackshear, Principal

Welcome!

Welcome to the Creekwood 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 CMS 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.

****Band is a full year course. Students who enroll are required 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.

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CONFERENCE PERIODS

The directors' main conference periods vary and can be found on the Creekwood MS Band website.

Please understand that our communication to you - the parents - is a very high priority for us. We want to take care of any concerns and make every situation the best for each student. Please contact us for clarification on any concerns before they become major issues.

Due to sectionals and student help sessions, it is difficult to reach us before or after school. If we are working with students, please understand that they are our highest priority and deserve our complete attention. Please allow 24 - 48 hours for a response.

E-MAIL POLICY

We will be sending home many updates and communications via email throughout the year. Due to the nature of email, all major concerns will need to be addressed through conferences or phone communication. This is to avoid any misunderstandings or unclear intentions through email communication. Parents are encouraged to use email to get more information or clarification regarding events, or to schedule a parent conference.

STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Students are also encouraged to communicate with the directors before concerns become issues. They should do this in person at an appropriate time, one on one. Again, clarification and solid communication will keep everything running smoothly throughout the entire year.

Throughout the year, we will be sending quite a bit of information home in the form of letters. 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.

Goals and Objectives

- Organizational Skills
- Practice techniques
- Mental and physical discipline
- Citizenship through group endeavors
- Cultural growth
- Value judgements
- Music Theory
- Proper instrumental technique
- Life lessons
- Creative self-expression
- Aural Skills
- Music appreciation
- Teamwork/social skills
- Performance skills

Conduct Expectations

Band members will observe all procedures set forth by Humble ISD, 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 staff, may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand, and possibly, the band program. This also applies to the actions of student leaders in both public and private events.
- All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Humble ISD and CMS Code of Conduct at all times. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the entire group.
- Students will follow directors' instructions.
- Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area with all necessary equipment at the beginning of rehearsal time.
- 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 talk by raising their hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be extremely quiet so that time will be utilized as 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 not write on the dry-erase boards without permission from a director.
- Students will utilize their assigned storage locker for instrument cases during rehearsals. Cases should not be brought into rehearsals unless requested by a director (exceptions: flute, clarinet, and oboe).

Financial Obligations

It is the philosophy of the Creekwood Middle School Band that no student should be denied the privilege of band membership due to financial hardship. For options in meeting financial obligations, parents should contact the director.

Fundraising

We have one fundraiser planned for the school year. Participation in fundraisers is encouraged, but not required. This fundraiser will be used to defray the students' fees and trip expenses, as well as purchase additional materials and equipment for the CMS Band Program. Due to budget limitations, this has become a necessity. If the money is not fundraised, then any expenses will be paid to the band department from the family's own financial resources.

A portion of the fundraiser profit will go towards operating expenses for the band program. Operating expenses are defined as expenditures not covered by HISD budget. Our "wish list" includes, but is not limited to: extra music for concerts, funds to bring in guest clinicians, supplies,

technology, sound equipment for the band department, commissioned music, instrument accessories, fees and/or deposits for honor band entries and other competitions.

The CMS Bands

Honors Band - selection into this group is by audition, director recommendation, and demonstration of academic proficiency. Members in this ensemble will participate in the TMEA Region Band process, Solo and Ensemble Contest, preparations for special possible honor concerts, and UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contests. Members of this group will have one section rehearsal outside of the school day each week. Additional rehearsals will be scheduled as needed. Honors Band will give numerous performances both on and off campus. In UIL activities, this group will be designated the "Varsity" band.

Symphonic Band - selection into this group is by audition. This group will participate in Solo and Ensemble Contest and UIL Concert and Sight Reading Contest. Members of Symphonic Band will have one section rehearsal each week outside of the school day. This group will give a variety of performances. In UIL activities, this group will be designated as the "Non-Varsity" band.

Beginning Band - This band is for first year band students. The main focus of this band is to learn how to play your instrument. No previous musical experience is required to be in beginning band, we start everyone from "scratch." Beginning Band gives limited performances, and competes in one contest at the end of the year. This class is mostly reserved for 6th graders, but is also open to 7th and 8th graders, their schedules permitting.

Students in the band program will be placed in a concert ensemble by audition, as well as director observation throughout the year.

Band Placement

Yearly placement in each band is based on the following criteria:

- Instrumentation needs and limitations
- Eligibility status

- Overall performance and consistent progress
- Attendance at all band functions
- Attitude and behavior
- Audition

Because band is a team, and missing parts and an imbalance of instrumentation compromises the entire group, participation in the CMS Band program is at least a one-year commitment.

Care of Facilities

- No gum, food, or drinks are allowed in the band hall except when authorized by the directors.
- 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, which includes but is not limited to writing or carving on walls or music stands, destroying music, or breaking school property.
- Practice and ensemble rooms are designed for practicing, not social gatherings.
- Please knock on office doors and wait to be invited in. Otherwise, offices are off-limits to students. Students may not use directors' phones without permission.
- The telephone in the band hall may not be used by non-band members. This phone is not to be used for personal calls, but may be used to call parents for rides, etc.
- The band hall is strictly limited to students who are enrolled in band. Students not in band must wait in the hallway while you take care of your business. It is the responsibility of every band member to help the directors monitor this and remind non band students to vacate the room.

Attendance

In order to have and maintain a high-quality band program, each member's attendance is essential. While the CMS band follows all school and district policies and procedures, the following additional guidelines outline the attendance procedures and policies for the CMS band. These attendance guidelines also apply to activities held outside of the school day.

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. All absences should be reported to the director at least 24 hours before the absence occurs. The earlier we know about it, the more time we have to find a solution. 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.

Unexcused Absence

Students with an unexcused absence from any required band activity will receive a zero in the grade book for that event. Rehearsals and football games cannot be made up. Concerts, contests, and competitions can be made up for a reduced grade.

Concerts/Performances

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 are mandatory. Periodically, the schedule may change and updates will be communicated. Concerts are considered to have two parts: the warm-up, and the performance. For the student, the concert begins at the warm-up. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes after the last group has performed and 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. **An unexcused absence from any mandatory performance will result in the loss of eligibility for the spring trip.**

Region 33 All Region Band Auditions - Region Band auditions are a requirement for all Honors Band students. This process takes place during the fall semester, and helps to develop players' individual performance abilities.

Special Note - Students absent from school for any reason, or students who are in alternative placement on the day of a concert, contest, or competition must notify the director of their absence from the performance by the beginning of the school day.

Grading Guidelines

Students will be expected to meet the responsibilities for each band class as determined by the director. Since band is an academic music class with some extra-curricular activities attached, the band student's grade will reflect achievement in both curricular and extra-curricular areas.

General Grading Guidelines

Students will be graded on the following scale:

Summative	60%
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Includes: Playing Tests (live and recorded), Preparation/Attendance at concerts and contests, Important rehearsals/document turn ins.

Formative **40%**

Includes: Practice Records, Participation, Supply checks, attendance at sectionals.

Weekly Practice Records

The rewards of playing a musical instrument increase in direct proportion to the number of hours invested in individual practice. The key is to set aside a designated time every day for practice. Set up a daily schedule to ensure that practice is an important part of your daily studies.

- Due every Monday (or first day back from holiday/sickness)
- 150 minutes of practice time per week.

Eligibility

All Humble ISD bands adhere to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and Humble ISD. Some band activities are designated as extra-curricular. Students participating in these activities are governed by eligibility requirements. A student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the nine-week period following a grade reporting period in which the student received a grade lower than seventy in any class. Loss of eligibility does not take effect until seven days after the end of the reporting period. Ineligible students are not suspended from practice or rehearsal for extra-curricular activities. The student is not suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for the summer or any other vacation time. Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student has been suspended as a result of failing, he/she may regain eligibility by passing ALL courses by the third week or sixth week of the following grading period. Reinstatement of eligibility would occur seven days after the three-week or six-week progress report period.

The eligibility law does not affect activities that are considered curricular components of any course. Examples of these activities are all rehearsals and performances that take place as a regular extension of classroom instruction. Any performance that is competitive in nature or for which admission is charged is deemed extra-curricular.

Instrument Storage and Identification

Instrument lockers are to be used for instrumental storage ONLY! Each student is assigned a specific locker, which is to be kept clean. Instruments are to be put in their cases, and the cases kept closed and latched while in the storage area. Sixth grade students will begin to consistently bring their instruments home as soon as their band director instructs them.

It is suggested and all personal instruments have the proper insurance coverage. This is easily done by adding it to your homeowners insurance (usually at no extra charge). Personal instruments are NOT insured by Creekwood Middle School or Humble ISD.

Band students will take home their instruments and band binders every evening. Students are expected to practice regularly outside of band class and private lessons.

Students are not allowed to leave their instrument unattended at any time. There will be consequences for any student whose instrument is brought to us by another student, teacher, etc. - whether it is found on or off school property.

Section Rehearsals

All 7/8th grade students will have at least one weekly section rehearsal with their band's section. Students are expected to be punctual and prepared. Absence from section rehearsals must be in accordance with the attendance policy. Students must make every effort to attend. Section rehearsals are an extension of the classroom and are graded accordingly. Section rehearsal schedules may be found on the band website or by contacting the student's director.

It is imperative that each sectional begin on time with everyone in attendance. Students who miss a sectional will not receive credit for participation. Please be aware of your child's sectional day/time and make every effort to assure that he/she is on time and ready to learn! Please do not schedule a dentist, doctor, or any other appointments during your Child's sectional time. It will cause him/her to fall behind the rest of the group.

Unexcused absences will result in student and parent notification. More than two unexcused absences per semester will result in the loss of eligibility for the spring trip.

Private Lessons Program

Private lessons are available to Creekwood students as an option and are recommended for those who wish to make faster progress and gain more musical enjoyment. The private lesson teachers endorsed by the Kingwood bands are all interviewed and selected by the band directors from KHS, KPHS, CMS,

KMS, and RMS. Most lessons are taught at KHS, although some teachers choose to teach in their house. Payment of lessons is the responsibility of the student or parents.

- ALL students are highly encouraged to take individualized private instruction.
- Teachers are screened by Humble ISD
- Private Lessons lists will be distributed the first week of school, and are available on the band website

Uniform Guidelines

Honors, Symphonic, and Concert Band Members:

INFORMAL UNIFORM: To be worn at Pep Rallies and Football Games.

- Current years Band Shirt
- Blue Jeans (No holes or rips, No black jeans)
- Above the Ankle Black Socks
- Neutral Color Closed-Toe Shoes

FORMAL UNIFORM: To be worn at all other occasions.

- White Collared Button Down Dress Shirt
- Creekwood Band Jacket & Bowtie (checked out to students by CMS)
- Black Dress Pants (No black jeans)
- Black Belt (Optional)
- Above the Ankle Black Socks
- Black Dress Shoes or flats. (No heels or tennis shoes are allowed)

A \$10 uniform Fee is required at the beginning of each school year. This covers the cost of dry cleaning the jackets and the cost of a Garment Bag for each student.

BEGINNING BAND UNIFORM: To be worn at all performances.

- Current years Band Shirt
- Blue Jeans (No rips or holes, no black jeans)
- Black Belt (Optional; t-shirt will be tucked in)
- Above the Ankle Black Socks
- 100% Black Closed-Toe Shoes

Trip Criteria

Every year the band takes a trip in April/May. This trip rewards the students for all of their hard work throughout the school year. **In order to participate in these trips, the students must do the following:**

- Students must be eligible on the 3rd nine weeks Report Card, according to Humble ISD and TEA Policy.
- Turn in their media release forms and permission slips.
- Must attend UIL Contest (7th & 8th grade), or have an excused absence.
- Must not have more than two unexcused absences from sectionals/rehearsals per semester.
- Must not have any unexcused absences from mandatory performances.
- Must attend Humble ISD Solo and Ensemble Contest, or have an excused absence.
- Perform all competition music at designated metronome marking at a 90%. This includes correct notes, rhythms, intonation, and dynamics. Students may be required to perform music more than once. All music must be performed by a scheduled date.
- Cannot have been sent to DAEP at any time during the school year.
- Cannot have received In-School-Suspension more than once during the semester in which the trip occurs.
- Must not have received more than 5 demerits during the school year.

Region Band/Orchestra Guidelines

- All Honors Band students are required to audition for All-Region Band.
- All other band students are encouraged to audition if the preparation of their music is at a high performance level (determined by director). These students must also either attend Honor Band sectionals, or be enrolled in private lessons.
- Students will be graded on preparation for this event.
- Any person who is selected will attend all rehearsals and the performance of the All-Region Band. Check the calendar for dates.

It is quite an honor to be selected to the All-Region band. Hundreds of students throughout the region will audition. Even if you are not selected, the experience you receive by preparing will enhance your musical ability and education!

Solo and Ensemble

All Honors and Symphonic Band members will perform a solo at the annual Solo and Ensemble Contest. All Honors Band members will also perform an ensemble.

Grades will be issued for preparation and participation in the solo and ensemble process. Students will have an assigned accompanist and must be prepared for their rehearsals.

Please remember that participation in the Humble ISD Solo and Ensemble Contest does affect trip eligibility.

Band Hall Hours

The band hall normally opens for section rehearsals at 7:00 am, and closes at 5:15 pm, except on Fridays or the day before a holiday - in which case the band hall will close at 4:15 pm. The band hall may be open for private lessons, as needed by the private lesson teachers.

Sectionals will be held from 7:00 - 8:00 am before school, and from 4:15 - 5:15 pm after school for Honors and Symphonic Band members. Due to sectionals, and the need for minimal distractions, students are not allowed into the band hall before 8:00 am, and need to have grabbed all of their belongings and exited the band hall by 4:15 pm.

For More information please visit our band website:

www.creekwoodmsband.com

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email us! We are so excited that you have chosen to be a part of our band family this year!