



Perry Meridian High School Bands Handbook
2026-2027 School Year

www.perrymeridianbands.org

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July 29, 2026

PMHS Band Students and Parents,

Welcome! We are very excited that you are a part of our band program for the 2026-2027 school year at Perry Meridian High School. We are looking forward to getting to know each of you better, and anticipating a productive year, full of continued growth and achievement.

Attached you will find a copy of the band department handbook. The handbook includes information regarding ensembles, attendance, classroom expectations, grading, and other pertinent information. Please take time to look over it, and sign the student/parent acknowledgement form (via Google Forms) by August 7th.

Please let us know if you have any questions about anything contained in the handbook, or otherwise. The Band office door is always open, or if you prefer to contact us by email or phone, that information is listed below.

We are looking forward to working with all of you to make this a great year!

Sincerely,

Michael A. Richardson
Director of Bands
Perry Meridian High School
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Asst. Band Director
Perry Meridian High School
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Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Perry Meridian High School Band Program to develop the individual student through musical experiences that promote the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to become free-thinking individuals, independent musicians, life-long learners, informed consumers of music, participants of music-making, and advocates of music and music education.

Philosophy Statement

We study music because it is a unique form of knowledge and communication. It gives the student a chance to explore an emotional means of communication and discover how to express their own feelings in a positive and appropriate manner.

Performance is the primary means of learning in the band program. Through performance, a student achieves musical independence through the development of technical ability, listening skills, ensemble skills, and theoretical knowledge.

Participation in the Concert Band is the primary vehicle for this musical development. Marching Band, Jazz Band, Pep Band, ensembles, and solos enrich the overall musical experience for the students. In such a program, students are exposed to a wide variety of the finest in musical literature, and therefore learn to appreciate the value of music.

Besides achieving true musicianship, students gain an understanding of their musical heritage and develop their creative abilities. Each activity in the band program contributes to a well-rounded musical education and helps students experience the joy and satisfaction of music making.

There are also many valuable by-products of music study through band participation. Students learn the skills of responsible group membership and participation. Participation in band encourages the development of a good work ethic. In addition, current research studies have found the study of music to have positive effects on mental performance and critical thinking skills.

The band program, which has the students as its central focus, promotes learning through the art of music making and the development of musical understanding, will most fully provide all the benefits such a program can offer. We seek to be this type of organization.



Band Department Staff

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Director of Bands

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Hunter Wheatcraft

Percussion Director

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Tim Patton

Color Guard Director

E-mail: dpatton@perryschools.org

Membership Qualifications

Any student in 9th grade or higher who is in good standing with Perry Township Schools is eligible for membership in the Band program. Good standing means the student has adequately demonstrated the educational skills and behaviors necessary to make a positive contribution. It also means that the student has successfully completed all band requirements from the previous year (if applicable). All students participating in band are expected to enroll for both the fall and spring semesters of the course (Unusual or special circumstances such as academic conflict may be considered by the directors).



Ensemble Offerings

Curricular Concert Bands

These ensembles are the primary vehicle for music instruction. During Freshman year, all students are placed in the Concert Band as an introduction to the High School Band program and a transition from the Middle School experience. As upperclassmen, students are placed in either Wind Ensemble or Symphonic Band based on participation in extracurricular ensembles, demonstrated work ethic, coachability, dependability, and overall musical skill. All ensembles perform a number of official concerts during the school year and also participate in Indiana State School Music Association events.

HS Percussion Ensemble

10th-12th Grade Percussionists take this class in lieu of a Concert Band, thereby providing optimal musical development of all band members. Students learn all concert band music in addition to percussion repertoire and will be combined with the rest of the band as performances approach. The Percussion Ensemble will perform at all official High School Band concerts held at PMHS. Students will receive a contest experience directly geared toward Percussion students through participation in ISSMA Solo & Ensemble or the Indoor Percussion group.

Marching Band & Pep Band

Marching Band is an extra-curricular ensemble open to all students in grades 9-12. The Marching Band performs at all home football games, various area parades & contests, college band days, and ISSMA/BOA marching events. **All events are considered performances** and are an expectation for continued participation in the ensemble. The "Falcon" Pep Band performs at 10 basketball games per year (5 boys, 5 girls) as well as pep rallies and other events. Marching & Pep Band participation is an important part of the Perry Meridian Band curriculum and fulfills a vital community role for the band program.

1. Members of the Marching Band & Pep Band are required to be registered for band class. If there is a scheduling conflict, please see Mr. Richardson.
2. Attendance is mandatory at all rehearsals and performances.



Jazz Bands

The Perry Meridian High School Jazz Bands are curricular ensembles that meet during the school day. Membership is determined by the directors based on student skill, instrumentation needs, and goals for the ensemble. This is an opportunity for students to gain extra musical experience by playing a unique style of music. These ensembles feature only traditional “Big Band” style instrumentation: Saxophones, Trumpets, Trombones, Piano, Drum Set, Guitar, and Bass. All students who play Woodwind or Brass instruments are required to be dual-enrolled in a Concert Band. The Jazz Bands hold two Jazz Cafe’ events per year, participate in multiple college Jazz festivals, and the ISSMA Jazz Festival. There will also be an extra-curricular Jazz Ensemble offered that is open to all students and instrumentation. This group will provide many of the same functions as the curricular Jazz Bands.

Winter Guard & Indoor Percussion

Winter Guard and Indoor Percussion ensembles are extracurricular groups that are active from November until April. They are open to all students in grades 9-12. These groups may perform in Indiana High School Color Guard Association (IHSCGA), Indiana Percussion Association (IPA), Winter Guard International (WGI) contests and select community performances. Students are required to be registered for a band class to be part of Indoor Percussion, but not Winter Guard. These ensembles are directed by the Guard & Percussion staff.

Other Events

There are several music organizations in Indiana that put on high quality events for band students throughout the year. They include ISSMA Solo & Ensemble Contest, IBA All-District & All-State Band, IJEA All-District & All-State Jazz Band, and many others. For information about these activities, please contact the Band Directors.



Classroom Rules and Expectations

1. Students are expected to be in the band area when the bell rings. Tardies will be enforced. Please note that excessive tardies can result in eventual removal from the course.
2. Class will begin 3 minutes after the bell each day. Students should be seated and ready for rehearsal at this time. Students who are not in their seats will be counted as tardy.
3. Each individual is responsible for having all materials for participation in class each day. This includes an instrument, pencil, sheet music, reeds, and anything else that is applicable to participation in band class.
4. There is no food or gum allowed at any rehearsal or performance.
5. Talking while a conductor is on the podium is interpreted as a total lack of respect for your classmates and instructors. Please focus on the task at hand.
6. Be respectful of school owned instruments and equipment. At the conclusion of rehearsal, instruments should be put away properly. This includes: putting covers on instruments and storing mouthpieces, sticks, mallets, small percussion equipment, reeds, mutes, and other equipment properly.
7. Cell phones will be handled per the Perry Township Schools' policy.
8. Failure to comply with the above listed rules may result in a grade deduction, office referral, and/or eventual removal from the program.



Grading

Student grades are based on a blend of 2 categories:

- Practice (20% of the total grade). Generally defined as anything that is done in class with instructor guidance.
- Performance (80% of the total grade). Defined as anything done outside of class, such as giving performances, or assignments without direct instructor guidance.

Classroom Participation (Practice)

All students are expected to conduct themselves with the behavior of professional caliber musicians at all times during band department performances, rehearsals, & activities. Students will be evaluated on their achievement in this area.

Each full week of band is worth 15 points. Each student will earn full points by default, with deductions made for the following missed opportunities for achievement:

- Tardy: -1/Missing Music: -1/Missing Instrument: -2/Classroom Disruption: -1 to -4

Concert Performances (Performance)

All students will participate in required ensemble concerts and rehearsals outside of the school day. Since concerts are the primary exams in band, there are very few excused situations for absence. Our classes are “Co-Curricular” which means that events occurring outside the school day are **mandatory** for course requirements and grading. The following list is not all-inclusive.

Excused Absences from a Concert

- Severe illness verified with documentation.
- Sudden emergency situations (such as death of a family member).
- Recognized religious holidays or widely understood church-mandated absences, when documentation is given and the request is made 30 DAYS BEFORE the concert date.
- IHSAA-sanctioned single-elimination playoff events.

Excused Absences from a Rehearsal

- All items listed above PLUS:
- Participation in a sport or academic competition (performance over rehearsal)
- Absence from school that day.

Unexcused Absences from a Concert

- Job Conflicts
- Family Vacations
- Studying or doing homework (part of any organization is managing your time effectively. Don't commit if you can't follow through!)
- Malfunctioning musical equipment (i.e. “my instrument broke”)
- SAT or ACT tests (these events offer several dates, and therefore are avoidable)
- Undisclosed “personal reasons”.
- Illness without school nurse or physician documentation.



Making Up Excused Absences from a Concert

Hopefully it is clear that performances are very important to our program, and absences are not taken lightly. When circumstances merit an absence, students must complete both of the following:

- A personal recording of all music the student would have performed at the concert. This is due one week after the student's return after the concert.
- Provide a written note signed by a parent explaining the reason for the absence.

Making Up Excused Absences from Rehearsals

- Students may make up missed rehearsals with 30 minutes of verified practice time. Students may also practice during Study Hall/Advisory practice sessions.

Daily Practice Accountability (Practice)

- In performance music, every rehearsal is important because each one provides the student with physical contact time with their instrument. An absence for ANY reason means that the student has lost that contact time, and therefore needs to catch up with their classmates.
- If the band plays on a particular day, there are ABSOLUTELY NO EXCUSED ABSENCES from making up missed class time. ANY rehearsal absence for ANY reason (sickness, field trip, holiday, etc.) must be made up with 20-40 minutes of outside practice time (verified by a form signed by a parent if the practice happens at home, verified by the Band Directors if it happens at school). Any absences not made up within a week of the student's return to school will result in the loss of points for that day (5 points).
- This item can cause confusion, because some students will feel that an excused absence from school would exempt them from this requirement. Simply put: if you miss an in-class assignment in a Math class, you are expected to make this up. If you miss a pop quiz in Social Studies, you will make this up upon your return, out of fairness to the rest of the students in the class who were present that day. This is not considered punishment or unfair treatment! Missing a day in band class is no different; this is an academic activity, and making up missed material is part of standard academic practice.
- Please note that participating in an extra-curricular ensemble (Marching, Jazz, Pep Band) does not fulfill the practice requirement.

Playing/Written Assessments (Performance)

- Playing exams are given periodically as needed to ensure proper individual musical development. All playing tests may be retaken ONCE for an improved grade. Exams may either be recorded or live. Students may submit a test on a particular piece until the end of that performance cycle.
- Written assignments will be periodically given in all band classes to ensure students are not just learning performance skills. Written assignments may be submitted late for full credit within a week of the due date. After a week, it becomes worth 75% of the original points.



Guidelines for Band Trips

1. Be on time.
 2. You are responsible for seeing that all items that you will need are placed in the proper place for travel. Do NOT assume someone will do this for you.
 3. Everyone travels with the group and returns with the group. Only in extreme circumstances will an exception be made in traveling to performances. Special permission to return home in some other manner may be granted if a **WRITTEN** note from a parent or guardian is given to the director before departure.
 4. Bus travel is to be quiet. Only music devices with earphones are allowed on the bus. Please use discretion when bringing valuables on a band trip.
 5. Follow the instructions of the directors, staff, bus drivers, and parent chaperones at all times. They are your legal guardians in the absence of your parents.
 6. Parents should be notified of our return time prior to departure. We will make every effort to return according to the trip itinerary.
 7. For the safety and security of all students, the director and chaperones reserve the right to check all luggage prior to departing on overnight trips.
 8. Before every trip, your child will be given an itinerary for the day. This is done as a convenience for your family. We will make every effort to arrive home on time.
- Please be on time when picking up your student.** Thank you for your efforts.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO POLICY: The use of these substances will not be tolerated during any band activity at school or away. School and local authorities will deal with any students found with these items, incurring the same penalties as if the offense occurred during the school day. In addition, the student(s) will be sent home immediately at the parent's expense. Students in violation face the penalties set forth by the school, up to and including removal from the band program entirely.

Concert Attire

Ladies:

- Black long-sleeved dress shirt or blouse.
- Black dress slacks.
- Black dress shoes (no tennis shoes or flip-flops. Heels must be an inch or less)
- A long black dress is also acceptable. Skirts should be at least knee length.

Gentlemen:

- Black long-sleeved shirt (button down is preferable)
- Black dress pants
- Black dress shoes (Marching Band shoes are fine. No tennis shoes/flip flops)



School Instrument Rental

If a student is renting an instrument from the school they must reach out to the Band Directors for access. When using a school instrument, there is an instrument rental fee that is in addition to the band fee with the school. This is to cover the cost of basic repairs and maintenance on the instrument. If there is an issue paying the fee for any reason, please contact the directors so that something may be worked out. All rental instruments must be turned in for basic repairs and cleaning at the end of each school year. If an instrument is not returned clean or if it has damage, the student may incur extra fees for more serious repairs. Instruments may be checked out over the summer, but it must be turned in before it may be checked back out.

Required Instrument Materials

Flute: Cleaning Swab

Oboe: Two functioning reeds, cleaning materials

Bassoon: Two functioning reeds, cleaning swab, seat strap

All Clarinets: Three functioning reeds, cleaning swab, cork grease

All Saxophones: Three functioning reeds, neck strap, cleaning materials

Trumpet: Mouthpiece, valve oil, polishing cloth, cup mute, straight mute

French Horn: Mouthpiece, rotor oil, polishing cloth, straight mute

Trombone: Mouthpiece, slide oil, rotor oil (if using an F-attachment), cleaning swab, straight mute, polishing cloth

Euphonium: Mouthpiece, valve oil, polishing cloth

Tuba: Mouthpiece, valve oil, polishing cloth

Percussion: Snare Sticks (IP-LD or similar), Mallets (IP240 or similar), Practice Pad

You are encouraged to explore options to find the best price and service to fit your needs. PMHS Bands do not get reimbursed in any way for endorsement of a certain company over another.



General Information

Band Boosters

Each parent with a student enrolled in the band program is considered a member of the Band Booster organization. The purpose of this parent group is to provide communication, encouragement, assistance, and financial support to the band program. Each year there is an election of executive officers for the band boosters, of which any parent is eligible. General meetings will be held quarterly in which all parents are encouraged to attend. The boosters also conduct a series of fundraisers and band events to support the tremendous amount of work that the students put in each year. This is an excellent opportunity to be involved in your child's education and to help support the band program. For more information, please contact the directors or one of the Booster officers.

Canvas

Students will be able to find this handbook and extra PDF copies of music for their ensembles under the "Files" or "Modules" tab on Canvas. Once music is handed out, extra copies will not be available from the directors. Occasional playing tests may also be submitted through the platform.

Use of Artificial Intelligence/Natural Language Processing Tools

Students are required to rely on their own knowledge, skills, and resources when completing school work. In order to ensure the integrity of the educational process and to promote fair and equal opportunities for all students, except as outlined below, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools (collectively, "AI/NLP tools") is strictly prohibited for the completion of school work. The use of AI/NLP tools, without the express permission/consent of a teacher, undermines the learning and problem-solving skills that are essential to academic success and that the staff is tasked to develop in each student. Students are encouraged to develop their own knowledge, skills, and understanding of course material rather than relying solely on AI/NLP tools and they should ask their teachers when they have questions and/or need assistance. Unauthorized use of AI/NLP tools is considered a form of plagiarism and any student found using these tools without permission or in a prohibited manner will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.



Private Lessons

It is strongly recommended that students study privately on their instruments. Top leadership positions, awards, and scholarships go to those students who study the fine points of their instruments. Lessons are valuable because they address your specific needs, something that cannot always be done in a large group setting. If you are an advanced player, lessons will challenge you further. If you feel inadequate as a player, they will give you direction for improvement and to play with more confidence. As a private student, you will have the responsibility of attending your lessons regularly and applying the ideas and techniques you explore during a lesson to your daily practice routine. This, in turn, will help us improve as a band. Please see the below for a list of local private teachers.

Flute

Jenna Page - (317) 603-5573 (jenniferpageflute@gmail.com)

Dianne Seo - (949) 482-7014 (dianneseo23@gmail.com)

Oboe

Crystal Barrett - (812) 360-3534 (oboelian@hotmail.com)

Pam Ajango - (317) 940-8694 (pajango@butler.edu)

Bassoon

Mark Ortwein - (ortweinm@uindy.edu)

Doug Spaniol - (317) 940-8368 (dspaniol@butler.edu)

Clarinet

Melissa Main - (616) 951-2155 (mmain@perryschools.org)

Mary Bowman - (317) 727-5927 (maryazig@gmail.com)

Saxophone

Cheri Brightman - (317) 908-6138 (cheribhb@aol.com)

Steven Georges - (812) 371-5992 (team@momentsnoticerepair.com)

Trumpet

Shawn McNabb - (317) 988-8815 (shawn.mcnabb@wayne.k12.in.us)

Eric Rodriguez - (409) 201-9447 (eric.rodriguez16@gmail.com)

French Horn

Jeanne Getz - (301) 875-7508 (jeanne.k.getz@gmail.com)

Cory Kirby - (765) 717-4838 (ckirbyhorn@gmail.com)

Trombone

Jack Connolly - (219) 742-8925 (jconnolly9999@gmail.com)

Ryan Miller - (millerrr@uindy.edu)

Euphonium/Tuba

Josh Davis - (937) 689-1896

Anthony Kniffen - (317) 490-8833 (akniffen@butler.edu)

Percussion

Brantley Heath - (bheath@perryschools.org)

Terence Mayhue - (217) 549-8989 (mayhuet@uindy.edu)

Hunter Wheatcraft - (317) 752-6701 (hwheatcraft@outlook.com)



Director's Statement

Please understand that the Directors will have final say on any issue related to the Perry Meridian High School Band program. The policies laid forth in this handbook will be enforced. Under extremely rare circumstances, however, the directors may find it necessary to alter the policy for the best interest of the student. Be aware that every effort will be made to avoid this circumstance if possible.

National Music Standards

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
 3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
 4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
 5. Reading and notating music.
 6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
 7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
 9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.



2026-2027 PMHS Bands Concert Schedule (Subject to Change)

Fall Band Concert	Wednesday, Sept. 23	PMHS
Veterans Day Convo.	Wednesday, Nov. 11	PMHS
IJEA All-District Jazz	Sat./Sun. Nov. 14-15	Whiteland Comm. HS
IBA All-District Band	Sat./Sun. Nov. 21-22	Shelbyville HS
Butler Jazz Festival	Monday Dec. 7	Butler Univ.
Winter Jazz Cafe'	Saturday Dec. 12	PTAC
ExtravaBANDza	Tuesday Dec. 15	PMHS
IBA All-State Auditions	Sunday Jan. 10	Pike HS
Purdue Jazz Festival	Saturday Jan. 23	Purdue Univ.
ISSMA Solo & Ensemble	Saturday Feb. 6	Franklin Central JH
ISSMA State S&E	Saturday Feb. 27	North Central HS
ISSMA Jazz Festival	Fri./Sat. Mar. 5-6	TBA
ISSMA Organizational	Fri./Sat. Apr. 23-24	TBA
ISSMA State Quals	Fri./Sat. Apr. 30-May 1	TBA
Spring Jazz Cafe'	Friday May 14	PTAC
Spring Band Concert	Wednesday May 19	PMHS
Commencement	Saturday June 5	Southport HS