



Mrs. Ciji Coates and Mrs. Nancy Ciacciarelli, HMS Band Directors

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The HMS 7th & 8th grade band program is an exciting continuation of the ARIS 6th grade band experience. This large program currently has over 200 members with lots of ways to participate and get involved!

HMS Band Placement:

HMS has 3 curricular bands - Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble. To better serve all instrumental students, ensemble placement is based upon performance level, not grade level and there can be fluidity (*i.e. changes*) to placement if needed. This allows for improved flexibility and personalized instruction. Additionally, students are placed into the performance group that will support/promote individual growth, musical development, and achievement. **All** ensembles provide the appropriate developmental progression from the ARIS 6th Grade Band experience.

Students will be placed into Concert Band or Symphonic Band in the beginning of the school year after an informal ensemble placement screening. Specific music will be shared in June with ARIS band directors for summer practice in preparation for these fall screenings.

All students are accepted and welcome into the program!

Wind Ensemble placement will be determined by a more rigorous placement process which will require students to prepare the most rigorous literature piece in the ensemble placement packet. Students will also be expected to perform 3 major scales and a one octave chromatic scale. Wind Ensemble hopefuls must demonstrate the most advanced musical ability with an attitude and positive approach to a challenge! This ensemble performs music comparable to early high school bands.

A sign-up form for ensemble placement screenings will be shared in early September prior to the start of the new school year via email. A contract outlining specific program expectations will also be shared early in the school year via email.

The following pages will serve as a program overview.

HMS Bands:

The majority of incoming 7th graders will be placed into Concert Band or Symphonic Band.

Below is a list of performance criteria for all three curricular HMS Bands:

Concert Band: Level 1 - performs band literature ranging from grade 1 to 1.5

Scale expectations by end of year: Concert Bb, Eb, F and C scale.

Observation of basic accidentals within those keys and enharmonics.

Concert Band rehearses on Monday and Tuesday mornings.

Symphonic Band: Level 2 - performs band literature ranging from grade 1 to 2.

Scale expectations by end of year: Concert Bb, Eb, F, C, Ab and chromatic scale.

Observation of basic accidentals within those keys and enharmonics.

Symphonic Band rehearses on Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Wind Ensemble: Level 3 - performs literature from grade 2 to 3.

Scale expectations by end of year: Concert Bb, Eb, F, C, Ab, G, D and chromatic scale.

Observation of challenging accidentals within those keys and enharmonics.

Wind Ensemble rehearses on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Jazz Ensemble

This is an extracurricular ensemble that meets Mondays and Fridays.

Students will study the basics of jazz style and jazz articulations.

Auditions will take place for Jazz Ensemble in November. Rehearsals will begin in December.

Specific, individualized schedules are created for students if there is a curricular band rehearsal conflict.



HMS Band Attendance Policy & Schedule:

Because Band is a performance based art, attendance is an essential element for the success and development of the entire group. All Band students are required to attend 2 mandatory before school ensemble rehearsals (period 0) per week and one small group lesson which will occur as a pull out that rotates throughout the school day. There is flexibility built within the schedule to minimize academic conflicts.

Students are to be dropped off for Period 0 rehearsals between 7:00 am - 7:20 am. Period 0 begins promptly at 7:30 am.

A friend finder carpool link for rideshare possibilities will be shared with all band and orchestra families *after* fall ensemble placements.

Unexcused period 0 rehearsal absences include:

1. Students who are in school *during* the school day, yet do not attend period 0 rehearsal (including doctor appointments).
2. Students who schedule extra academic help during period 0 band rehearsals. Band is also a core subject. If extra academic help is needed in another core subject, students need to arrange for help on a non band rehearsal day.
3. Any club activity that interferes with any rehearsal one month before a concert event.

Students who are in school and do not attend period 0 rehearsals or small group lessons during the day will receive an F (50%) for individual/group performance.

The dress rehearsal (final rehearsal at HHS) and the rehearsals one week prior to the concert are mandatory.

1 quarter rest absence “coupon” may be used per marking period. The quarter rest “coupon” will serve as a single “free pass” and will not impact band ensemble grade for that particular marking period (this coupon is not redeemable one month prior to a concert).

3 late arrivals within a given marking period will equal 1 unexcused absence within a marking period.

Small Group Lesson Instruction:

Small group lessons will rotate throughout the entire school day with the exception of lunch periods.

Students will be placed in homogeneous groups (*same instruments*) from the same performing ensemble.

Weekly individual performance grades are determined based upon small group lesson performance & preparation (evidence of home practice).

Students will receive an F (50%) for not attending a weekly lesson if they are not absent from school.

A *“flex”* schedule option will be provided in the event that a student experiences an unavoidable conflict (*academic assessment or test review*) and needs to attend his/her lesson at an alternate time. All lesson groups are provided with at least one “flex option” lesson time.

Students will be responsible for notifying Mrs. Coates or Mrs. Ciacciarelli one day prior to the lesson should this situation occur.

Students should also email or speak to Mrs. Coates or Mrs. Ciacciarelli throughout the year with any issue or concern whenever it arises.

Rehearsal Etiquette for HMS Band Rehearsals/Lessons:

1. Anything that disrupts the flow of a rehearsal is considered to be poor rehearsal etiquette.
2. Have all of the materials that you need. Stopping a rehearsal to get things wastes time.
3. Be ready to go when the rehearsal starts.
4. Every rehearsal has natural breaks or pauses in the routine. If you have a question, wait until there is a natural pause. Always raise your hand.
5. Every rehearsal goes through the process of breaking down the performance piece into small sections. Naturally, there is a lot of stopping and restarting. It is during these in-between times that the director or members will want to evaluate and describe the things that went well or need to be fixed. It makes sense that there is no talking during this time.
6. Often during a rehearsal, one section will rehearse while another section is left idle. When other sections are rehearsing, listen and watch what they are doing. You will probably have to do the same thing yourself. Whatever you do, do not talk or disrupt. The group leader will take this as a sign of disrespect to both the leader and the other performers.
7. Mark or make note of important things that the director or other members point out so that you will remember it next time. It is a waste of time to go back and relearn what you have already learned. Wasted time results in a sloppy performance.
8. Make transitions smooth, quiet, and seamless.



Required Materials for HMS Band/Lessons:

Students are expected to attend rehearsals and lessons with the following:

1. instrument, binder, lesson book, tuner/metronome combo (*phone tuner apps are not permitted*), and a pencil (mechanical pencils are most convenient).
2. Lesson books should not be purchased until the fall after ensemble placement screenings have concluded.
A band supply list will be available on the school website, google site and will be shared out via email to all families.
3. Students will also be required to purchase an HMS band t-shirt which will be worn for all concert dress rehearsals, Raider for a Day event in the fall, and HHS Recruitment Day.

Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phones are *not permitted* in the HMS rehearsal space, concert stage, or in the HHS auditorium due to distraction/disruption to the instructional environment.

Additional Information/General Policies:

1. Due to elevated performance standards, any student receiving a C or below during any marking period *will not be eligible* to participate in evening concerts, festival concert events, and the year end Dorney Park or Six Flags Great Adventure Field Trip.
Students at risk will be notified in a timely manner so that performance corrections can be made. While it is difficult for those impacted, **this policy is enforced.** (*students who regularly attend lessons/rehearsals and complete google classroom assignments ALWAYS earn an A or a B in HMS Band*). Students and parents are encouraged to regularly check grades in Genesis.
2. **Students are expected to check their email regularly.** Lesson schedules and important reminders are sent via email and on Remind text messages. Class codes for Remind will be sent after ensemble placements have been determined.
3. A carpool friend finder for morning ride share possibilities will become available in the fall.
A link to google sign-up form will be shared after ensemble placements.
4. Students are not permitted to leave their instruments at HMS over the weekends.

HMS BAND FAQ'S:

How many concerts do we perform?

The Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble perform 2 concerts per year at HHS. One in December and the other in May.

Concert attendance in mandatory. The Jazz Ensemble performs a separate concert in March or April in the HMS Jazz Cafe.

Additional volunteer performance opportunities are open to Wind Ensemble members: Veteran's Day Assembly at Triangle School, a Holiday Concert at Brookdale Assisted Living Facility, a Holiday Commons Concert for Staff and Families in December at HMS, and a National Anthem Performance at the Somerset Patriots TD Bank Ballpark.

Can I participate in sports at HMS and still be in band?

YES! Members of the band team are on almost *every* school sports team!

Is it difficult to carry my large instrument around the Middle School?

No! Similar to ARIS, the HMS Band area has shelves for instruments and instrument cages in the band room for larger instruments.

You can drop off your instrument in the morning and pick it up in the afternoon!

Are there any field trips?

Yes! We have exciting dress rehearsal trips to HHS, Raider for a Day Marching Band trip in the fall, and a fun year end trip to Dorney Park or Six Flags Great Adventure! Additionally, Wind Ensemble members have the opportunity to attend a Broadway Show in NYC and perform in an adjudicated concert band festival!

How am I graded in the HMS Band Program?

Students will receive a letter grade each marking period. Grades are determined by weekly individual performance, weekly ensemble performance, marking period performance assessments, and google classroom assignments. Information about grading will be discussed in the fall when classes begin. Expectations are clearly outlined, explained and posted in Genesis, google classroom, and are currently located on the HMS Band Google Web Site. All students need to maintain a B average in band in order to participate in evening concerts, festival concert events, and the year end Dorney Park or Six Flags Great Adventure Field Trip. Students who regularly attend lessons/rehearsals and complete google classroom assignments ALWAYS earn an A or a B in HMS Band. Students and parents are highly encouraged to regularly check grades in Genesis. Grading interventions are provided, however, students earning a C or below in any marking period will not perform in concert events or end of year Dorney Park/Great Adventure trip.

What do current HMS Band Students say about the program?

Current students were asked, “What is the best part about being a member of the HMS Band?”

“The best part is the community filled with like-minded people. It's easy to make friends”. ~ Swati, grade 8

“It's hard to chose what the best thing about being in the HMS band was. I started in one band in the winter then transitioned into another so I was able to get to know a lot of people. I got to meet new friends because of both bands. The pieces of music I was able to play really caught my attention. Each and every one made me so interested, it made me want to learn how to play it perfectly. Also, the trips we would go on to the high school for dress rehearsals and when we would go to an amusement park along with the orchestra and choir. Being will all my friends I bond over because of music is always really fun.” ~ Danica, grade 7

“Depends. If you like friends, fun and challenging music, memes and field trips, the HMS band program is definitely for you! With over 50 kids in a single band, you will always find friends, both 7th and 8th grade alike. Mrs. Coates and Mrs. Ciacciarelli always choose music that your band will enjoy learning over the months. Also, the teachers and band council have also posted a few comics and memes around the room(s) to promote laughter. And of course, there is always the many trips and extra performance opportunities throughout the year, including Broadway and Dorney Park near the summer. So, we hope that you enjoy your time here and that you will get a lot out of our extensive band program.” ~ Antonio, grade 8

“The people here are so nice and I made so many new friends, many of them who are in 8th grade!!” ~ Samarth, grade 7

“In my opinion, there are lots of “best parts” about being a part of the HMS band program! One of them is the friendships you forge with your peers along the way, 7th graders and 8th graders alike. I also love having band more than once a week, which gives us the opportunity to perform amazing pieces.” ~ Skyla, grade 7

“Having a supportive community and healthy activity around you!” ~ Benjamin, grade 7



“Great Fun, Great Friends, Great Music!”



Hillsborough Middle School Performing Arts

“Stronger Together!”