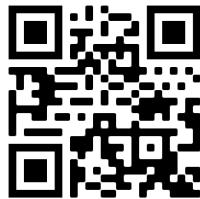


Belton Middle School Band Handbook
2026-2027

beltonmsband.org



Chris R. Pulley, Director of Bands

chris.pulley@bisd.net

254-215-2828

Patrick Trahan, Assistant Band Director

patrick.trahan@bisd.net

254-215-2870

Ian Smith, Percussion Specialist

ian.smith@bisd.net

254-215-2295

Table of Contents

Five Guidelines of Success.....	5
Attributes That Require ZERO Talent.....	5-6
Ensemble Descriptions.....	7
Performance Attendance & Rehearsal Participation.....	8-9
Band Events Defined.....	9-10
Academic Excellence & Grading Standards.....	10-11
Helpful Tips & Class Materials.....	11-13
Uniforms & Spring Trip.....	13-15
Private Lessons, Policies, & Communication.....	16-18
Handbook Acceptance Form.....	19

The Mission of the Belton MS Band: *“Through rewarding musical experiences, we empower students to acquire essential life skills, including punctuality, preparedness, self-discipline, and relentless grit. We hold our students accountable to the highest possible standards.”*

The Vision of the Belton MS Band: *“To serve as superior ambassadors of our community, we strive to embody professional character, exemplary behavior, and exceptional musical experiences for every student.”*

Five Guidelines of Success of the Belton MS Band

Membership in the Belton Middle School Band is a privilege that carries significant responsibility. As band members, students are constant ambassadors for Belton Middle School, Belton ISD, and the City of Belton. Therefore, it is imperative that your actions, language, and attitude consistently reflect the highest standards of professionalism and character. To guide our collective pursuit of excellence, the Belton MS Band upholds these Five Guidelines of Success:

1. **Be Punctual:** Arrive on time for every class and scheduled event. “On Time” means being seated, prepared, and ready to learn with all required materials before the director begins.
2. **Be Prepared:** Ensure that you have all necessary materials for each rehearsal and performance. This includes your music binder, pencils, a fully functional instrument, reeds, valve oil, and any other required accessories. Crucially, arrive with all assigned material learned and ready to perform, a standard achieved only through diligent daily practice.
3. **Be Disciplined:** Uphold all rules outlined in the Belton ISD Student Code of Conduct, both inside and outside the Band Hall. This guideline also encompasses the personal discipline essential for mastering a musical instrument, which, again, is cultivated through consistent daily practice.
4. **Be Relentless:** Cultivate the mental toughness, unwavering concentration, and laser-like focus necessary to achieve our daily goals of performing music with precision and artistry. Every student in the Belton MS Band program is expected to exhibit mental resilience and an unyielding commitment to themselves and their fellow members.
5. **Be Superior:** While “Superior” formally signifies a First Division award at UIL evaluation, within the Belton MS Band, it holds a deeper meaning. We believe that students who embody the preceding 4 guidelines will inherently achieve a state of “superiority”, regardless of any external rating. This guideline serves as a constant reminder to hold ourselves accountable to the highest possible standards in all endeavors.

Unlock Your Potential: Attributes That Require ZERO Talent

Success isn't just about what you're born with, it's about what you choose to do! The following attributes don't require any special talent, but they are crucial for standing out, achieving your goals, and becoming truly successful - not just in Band and school, but throughout your entire life. These are the qualities that will set you apart!

1. **Show Up Early:** When you arrive early, you're not just on time - you're prepared. This simple habit reduces stress, boosts your confidence, and ensures you're ready to tackle any challenge with a calm, focused mindset. Be the first to be ready!

2. **Be Prepared:** Having all your materials and assignments ready means you're always one step ahead. You'll absorb every bit of instruction, make faster progress, and never miss a beat. Preparation is the key to accelerating your learning and success.
3. **Radiate Positivity:** A positive attitude makes all the difference! When you approach interactions with peers, teachers, and adults with optimism, you create stronger connections and become a more effective team player. Your outlook shapes your experience.
4. **Cultivate A Strong Work Ethic:** Hard work isn't just important - it's unbeatable. Teachers and mentors are always eager to support students who consistently give their best effort. Your dedication speaks volumes and opens doors to incredible opportunities.
5. **Bring Full Energy:** Your energy is infectious! When you show up with enthusiasm, you uplift everyone around you, making the learning environment more vibrant and productive for the entire group. Be the spark that ignites greatness!
6. **Give 100% Effort:** Talent can get you started, but effort keeps you going. Students who commit fully to every task, regardless of their natural ability, learn more, grow faster, and are a joy to teach. Remember: Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard!
7. **Project Respectful Body Language:** Your body language communicates volumes, often more than your words. Ensure your posture and expressions always send a clear, positive message of engagement and respect. Non-verbal cues matter.
8. **Be Teachable & Adaptable:** Embrace new challenges and be willing to try unfamiliar things. A curious, open mind is essential for growth. Learn to follow effectively, and you'll develop the skills to lead with confidence and wisdom.
9. **Ignite Enthusiasm & Passion:** As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm". Discover what truly excites you, then channel that passion into everything you do, striving for excellence in every endeavor.
10. **Go Beyond the Extra Mile:** The greater your commitment, the greater your reward. Students who consistently exceed expectations distinguish themselves and demonstrate incredible ambition. How much you want it determines how hard you'll work for it.

"The goal is not to be perfect by the end. The goal is to be better than today!"

~Simon Sinek

"It isn't failure that holds you back. It's the emotional baggage you carry afterward. Self-doubt, regret, disappointment, and embarrassment are instruction manuals for learning. The goal isn't to dwell on what went wrong yesterday. It's to discover what you can do better today."

~Adam Grant

Ensemble Descriptions

Beginner's Ensemble (Beginning Band)

Embark on your musical journey with the Beginner's Ensemble! This foundational group welcomes first-year instrument players, primarily 6th graders, though dedicated 7th and 8th graders may also join. This year is critical, as students master 90% of the fundamental skills essential for lifelong instrumental success. We foster growth through specialized, like-instrument classes during the school day, culminating in engaging group rehearsals and inspiring concert performances throughout the school year.

Members actively participate in engaging group rehearsals, vibrant concerts, competitive contests, and may qualify for the exciting Spring Trip. To advance, students will undergo End-of-Year Auditions in late April for placement in either the on-level Symphonic Band or the advanced Wind Ensemble for the upcoming academic year. Audition materials will be provided a month in advance, ensuring ample preparation time. Please note, students who do not meet the audition standards will continue to refine their skills in the Beginner's Ensemble the following year.

The Beginner's Ensemble serves as a vital preparatory course, designed to equip students for successful and sustained participation in Band for the next 6 years, extending well beyond middle school.

Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble (Advanced Ensembles)

Elevate your musicianship in our advanced ensembles: the Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble. These next-level groups feature talented woodwind, brass, and percussion students, performing diverse and challenging repertoire. Our performance schedule includes compelling concerts, energetic pep rallies, competitive contests, and selective auditions. Exceptional students may also earn eligibility for the annual Spring Trip. Rising 6th and 7th grade students will audition in late April for placement in these ensembles for the next school year. Eighth grade students are presented with an exciting opportunity to audition for the renowned Belton High School Marching Hundred (M100) late in the spring semester.

Jazz Band (Advanced Ensemble)

Dive into the world of improvisation and unique rhythms with the Jazz Band, an exclusive advanced ensemble that meets daily during the school day. This dynamic group comprises committed 7th and 8th grade students playing saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, guitar, bass, vibraphone, auxiliary percussion, and drum set. Students will explore rich jazz history, develop appreciation for the genre, enhance their listening skills, and refine performance practices, including the art of improvisation.

Enrollment in Jazz Band requires students to dedicate one of their elective choices and be concurrently enrolled in either Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, or Intermediate/Advanced Orchestra. A special exception applies to rhythm section instruments (piano, guitar, bass, and drum set) who may join solely after a successful audition with the director. Admission to this elite ensemble is highly competitive, and not all auditioning students will be placed.

Parents, your unwavering encouragement and support, alongside our directors, are crucial to your child's success. Together, we empower them to achieve their dreams, navigate challenges, and cultivate a lifelong love for music. Our mutual goal is to help your child enjoy the triumphs and learn valuable lessons from every experience.

Performance Attendance & Rehearsal Participation

Performance Attendance: Our Shared Commitment

Our performances are the heart of our program - a culmination of hard work and shared musical passion. Therefore, **attendance at all performances is mandatory**. A missed performance cannot be made up and impacts the entire ensemble.

We understand that unforeseen circumstances can arise. Absences will only be approved for serious or emergency conflicts, and **advance director approval is essential**. Your prompt communication helps us support both your child and the ensemble.

If illness or a family emergency necessitates an absence, please contact your child's director at least **24 hours PRIOR** to the event. This teaches crucial accountability. Students are expected to attend every scheduled event unless an absence has been formally approved.

For any unavoidable conflicts, a written request or email from a parent or guardian must be submitted at least **3 days BEFORE** the performance or event. These requests will be reviewed and approved at the directors' discretion. Please note: Consistent absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may lead to a student's removal from the band program.

Every member is vital to our band's success. Just as a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, our ensemble thrives when every musician is present and engaged. Your presence matters!

Rehearsal Participation: Daily Growth

Our daily rehearsals are where musical growth truly happens. Students actively engage with the **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Fine Arts**, developing critical skills in individual and group performance across diverse musical styles.

These skills include:

- Performing with accurate intonation, rhythm, and expression, building fundamental solo and ensemble techniques
- Mastering a varied repertoire that represents different culture and genres
- Independently sightreading with precision in known keys and rhythms

Daily rehearsal participation is reflected in student grades. If a student is unwell or medically advised not to play their instrument, a doctor's or parent's note is required to be excused. We ask that excused absences be limited to the absolute minimum necessary. Even when unable to play, students are expected to assemble their instrument and "finger-along" during class to remain engaged with the music.

Should a student stay home due to illness, they are automatically excused from practicing their instrument that day. To prevent reinfection and maintain instrument hygiene, please sanitize mouthpieces, ligatures, and reeds with rubbing alcohol.

The success of our program is directly proportional to the overall attendance rate throughout the year. Your commitment powers our collective achievement!

A Note On Scheduling Appointments: Please consult the Band Calendar (beltonmsband.org/calendar) before scheduling medical, dental, or orthodontic appointments. These activities can sometimes impact a student's ability to participate effectively in rehearsals and performances. We kindly request that you make every effort to schedule appointments outside of band activities and class time to ensure continuous student involvement.

Band Events Defined

TMEA All-Region Band Auditions: Showcase Your Talent

These prestigious auditions offer an unparalleled opportunity for our most dedicated musicians. Participation is **required for all Wind Ensemble members** and **strongly encouraged for Symphonic Band students**. Additionally, All-Region Jazz Auditions are **mandatory for all Jazz Band members**.

Students from various districts converge to perform memorized scales and two prepared etudes (not memorized) for wind players. Percussionists showcase their versatility across 3 etudes: one étude each for snare drum, marimba, and timpani.

A panel of 3-5 professional musicians conducts a blind judging process, listening intently from behind a partition. This ensures fair evaluation based purely on musical merit. To participate, students **must be academically eligible**.

The highest achievers earn the honor of performing in the All-Region Band Clinic & Concert, led by a distinguished music educator. Selection to the All-Region Band represents the pinnacle of middle school band achievement, fostering immense individual growth and invaluable experience.

After School Sectionals & Rehearsals: Elevate Your Performance

These crucial sessions take place outside regular school hours, carefully scheduled to enhance our collective and individual performance. Times and locations are always announced well in advance, allowing ample planning time.

For Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble members, **After School Sectionals are mandatory and count as a weekly grade**. These sessions are vital for preparing for challenging events like All-Region Auditions in the Fall and the UIL Concert & Sightreading Evaluation in the Spring.

Beginner students will participate in After School Rehearsals a few days before their performances. This allows all 8 beginner classes to combine and rehearse as a unified "Beginner's Ensemble", ensuring a cohesive and polished sound for their performance.

Concerts: Our Shared Musical Celebration

Concerts are vibrant, non-competitive public performances, completely free of admission. We warmly invite all family members and friends to attend and celebrate our students' musical achievements.

As a cornerstone of our curriculum, **concert attendance is required for all participating students and constitutes a major grade**. Unlike competitive events, academic eligibility is not a prerequisite for concert participation, ensuring all students can share in these special moments.

Contests, Festivals, Invitational, & Evaluations: Competitive Excellence

These events represent our band's opportunity to showcase its talent in a competitive setting. Students perform before judges, receiving valuable feedback and striving for recognition and awards.

Due to the competitive nature of these performances, **students must meet academic eligibility requirements to participate**. This ensures that our band is represented by well-rounded, dedicated student musicians.

Solo Contest: A Personal Achievement

The Solo Contest is a remarkable opportunity for individual musical growth. **All academically eligible students are required to participate** - Beginners in February, and Advanced students in April.

During this event, students perform a prepared piece for area music educators, who provide constructive feedback based on defined musical standards. This experience fosters confidence, refines technique, and celebrates each student's unique musical journey.

Band Calendar

Changes in the calendar do happen as this is a living document. We will notify you of changes via email as soon as we become aware of them, and the most up-to-date calendar can always be found on the following websites: beltonmsband.org/calendar or tinyurl.com/beltonmsbandevents. Most performances and events require academic eligibility to participate.

Academic Excellence & Grading Standards

Academic Eligibility: Staying On Track

As mandated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), maintaining academic eligibility is crucial for participation in our band program. A grade below 70 on a 9-week report card will result in a student becoming ineligible for competitive performance privileges for a 3-week period. To proactively support our students, the directors closely monitor all grades regularly.

Parents, your partnership is invaluable. We encourage you to supervise your child's academic progress and communicate directly with their teachers regarding any grade concerns. Students, remember that your academic performance directly impacts not only your individual opportunities but also the success and unity of the entire Belton MS Band program. Every member is a vital link in our chain.

Understanding UIL Academic Requirements ("No Pass, No Play"):

- Should a student receive a grade below 70 in any subject, they will become ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities (including Athletics) beginning the Friday following the grading period in which the failing grade was recorded

- Eligibility can be regained on the Friday following the subsequent 3-week grading period, provided the student is passing all classes and has no “currently failing” remarks on their 3-week progress report

Grading: Recognizing Effort & Achievement

Daily Grades: 40% of Overall Grade

Daily grades encompass a range of essential activities including: active participation with class materials, successful pass-offs of assigned music, completion of playing assignments, written work, and mandatory weekly sectional attendance for Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble members.

For Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble, sectional attendance forms a significant portion of a student’s daily grade throughout both Fall and Spring semesters. These sessions are fundamental for mastering individual parts, contributing directly to the collective success of the ensemble.

Major Grades: 60% of Overall Grade

Major grades evaluate comprehensive understanding and performance, including but not limited to: concert performances, significant pass-offs, formal written tests, and playing tests. Diverse grading rubrics are utilized to assess assignments and auditions fairly and thoroughly.

Performance Grading Guidelines: Earning Full Credit

To ensure consistency and clarity, the following guidelines apply to all out-of-class performances for every ensemble. Adhering to these standards is essential for students to earn full credit:

- **Punctual Arrival - 25%:** Be present and ready before the director’s stated call time.
- **Complete Preparation - 25%:** Bring all necessary materials: instrument, sticks/mallets, music binder, pencil, and any other required items.
- **Proper Uniform - 25%:** Wear the designated uniform correctly, ensuring shirts are tucked in as required.
- **Exemplary Conduct - 25%:** Maintain disciplined behavior, observe concert etiquette, and demonstrate a positive attitude.

Students who meet all the above standards for a performance will receive a grade of 100. However, for each category standard not met, the corresponding percentage points will be deducted from their major grade, clearly reflecting areas for improvement.

Helpful Tips & Class Materials

Elevate Your Band Experience: Essential Tips for Success

I. Practice Smarter, Get Better!

“You have to apply yourself each day to become a little better. By applying yourself to the task of becoming a little bit better each and every day over a period of time, you become a lot better.”

-Coach John Wooden

Consistent, daily practice is the cornerstone of musical progress. To truly excel, students must dedicate time outside of class. Parents, your support is vital: Help your child establish a routine of 25 minutes of practice, at least 5 days a week. This dedicated practice time is as crucial as any other academic assignment and directly contributes to their growth and the ensemble’s success. Remember, in-class playing alone is not enough. We partner with you to cultivate strong, daily practice habits, fostering a love for music and continuous improvement.

- Set clear goals for each practice session
- Minimize distractions to maximize focus
- Adhere to a consistent daily practice schedule
- Always utilize a metronome and music stand

Weekly Practice XP Chart

	DAYS PRACTICED	-	DAYS NOT PRACTICED	=	EXPERIENCE POINTS (XP)	
PRO	7	-	0	=	+7 (XP)	😊
BEST	6	-	1	=	+5 (XP)	😄
BETTER	5	-	2	=	+3 (XP)	😊
GOOD	4	-	3	=	+1 (XP)	🙂
	3	-	4	=	-1 (XP)	
	2	-	5	=	-3 (XP)	
	1	-	6	=	-5 (XP)	
	0	-	7	=	-7 (XP)	

© 2021 Rob Chilton
Photocopying and printing this document is allowed for educational purposes.
Photocopying and/or printing of this document for resale is prohibited.

2. Arrive Prepared for Every Class

Ensure you have all necessary materials to make the most of every rehearsal. Being prepared demonstrates commitment and allows for uninterrupted learning.

- Instrument/Stick Bag, mouthpiece, ligature, and all required reeds
- A one-inch 3-ring binder, clearly labeled with your name
- Five notebook dividers and two highlighters
- A dozen (12) mechanical pencils, neatly stored in...
- A pencil bag or holder secured within your 3-ring binder

3. Unlock Your Potential with Private Lessons

Our progress offers access to exceptional private teachers from reputable institutions, providing individualized instruction that dramatically accelerates student development. Private lessons are mandatory for oboe and bassoon players, ensuring specialized attention. All students who seize this opportunity experience faster progress, enhanced skill mastery, and a deeper, more profound appreciation for musical artistry.

4. Plan Ahead: Dental & Braces Appointments

Your commitment to band events is essential for both your individual growth and the ensemble’s performance. Always consult the Band Calendar (beltonmsband.org/calendar) before scheduling any dental work or braces appointments. Many students find participation challenging or impossible immediately after these procedures, potentially missing crucial rehearsals and performances.

Class Materials & Instrument Care: What You Need To Know

Every student has received a comprehensive list of required items for their instrument. A one-inch 3-ring binder is mandatory for organizing your music book, sheet music, and all class handouts.

Instrument Repairs: Protecting Your Investment

If you believe your personal instrument needs repair, please have a director inspect it BEFORE taking it to a repair shop. Our directors possess expertise in minor repairs and can often save you both time and money. If your personal instrument is undergoing professional repair, inform the directors with a parent note or email. School-owned instruments requiring repair must always be submitted directly to the band directors; parents and students are not authorized to take school-owned instruments to external repair shops.

Band Hall & Practice Rooms: A Shared Space for Excellence

These dedicated spaces are for the use of current band students and lesson staff, strictly during director-approved times. We expect everyone to demonstrate respect and pride by maintaining a clean and orderly environment:

1. Absolutely no food, drinks, or gum are permitted in the Band Hall or any Ensemble/Practice Rooms unless special permission has been given.
2. Keep your lockers clean, organized, and securely closed and latched when not in the Band Hall.
3. Defacing property, including stands, chairs, walls, or lockers, is strictly prohibited and considered graffiti.
4. Access to the Band Hall and its facilities is restricted to current Band students only, at all times.

Instrument Storage: Security & Organization

Each student will be assigned a locker specifically for their instrument and essential band supplies. These lockers are designated solely for musical equipment and sheet music. Personal items such as Chromebooks, hoodies, athletic wear, or library books should be stored elsewhere to maintain order and security. Students may use their own combination or key lock to safeguard their instrument and supplies. Please provide the directors with your locker combination or an extra key for emergency access.

Uniforms & Spring Trip

Uniforms: Dress for Success!

Our uniforms foster a sense of unity and pride in our ensembles. Please review the specific guidelines for your ensemble below, and remember that adherence ensures a professional and cohesive appearance for all performances.

Beginner's Ensemble:

Your uniform consists of a band t-shirt, which you can purchase during Band Registration. Pair your band shirt with blue jeans (no overalls, please). Ensure your shirt is tucked in, and sleeves are worn down, not tied up at the shoulders. To maintain a unified look, please avoid wearing distracting necklaces, large

earrings, or bracelets. Gentlemen must wear a belt, and all students should wear calf-length socks (no ankle socks) with closed-toed shoes.

Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble:

Members of the Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble will wear a band polo shirt, available for purchase through Band Registration. These ensembles utilize two distinct uniforms, chosen based on the event's formality:

Formal Uniform (Class A)

This uniform is mandatory for all public concerts, contests, and evaluations, ensuring we present our best. Students and parents are responsible for supplying the following:

- Solid black pants (no jeans or cargo pockets)
- Solid black calf-length socks (no ankle socks)
- Solid black closed-toed dress shoes
- Solid black belt for gentlemen

Casual Uniform (Class B)

Wear this uniform for pep rallies, elementary tours, and other informal events. It includes your band polo shirt, tucked into blue jeans (no overalls, please). Gentlemen must wear a belt, and all students should wear calf-length socks (no ankle socks) with closed-toed shoes.

For all performances, shirts must be tucked in, and sleeves worn down. Please avoid wearing distracting necklaces, large earrings, or bracelets to maintain a unified and professional appearance.

Jazz Band:

Jazz Band members will wear a specific jazz band dress shirt, which can be purchased through Band Registration. For all performances, shirts must be tucked in, and sleeves worn down. To ensure a polished look, please refrain from wearing distracting necklaces, large earrings, or bracelets.

Students and parents are responsible for supplying the following:

- Solid black pants (no jeans or cargo pockets)
- Solid black calf-length socks (no ankle socks)
- Solid black closed-toed dress shoes
- Solid black belt for gentlemen

Spring Trip: Earn Your Spot!

Get ready for an exciting Spring Trip to Typhoon Texas (Austin), typically held on the second Saturday in May (weather permitting)! After Spring Break, each student will receive a personalized eligibility statement, detailing their status and any remaining balance after fundraiser credits. This trip is a fantastic reward for dedication and hard work, and we encourage everyone to strive for eligibility!

To be eligible for this memorable Spring Trip, students must meet the following important criteria:

1. Maintain Academic Eligibility

As an extracurricular activity, passing all classes with a 70 or above on your grade report during the trip's grading period is a must. Your academic success is our priority!

2. Submit Permission Slip

Ensure a completed and signed permission slip is returned by the deadline. No slip, no trip!

3. Attend All Performances

Your presence and participation in all performances are essential. These are graded and mandatory, contributing to the ensemble's success. A list of these performances can also be found on our Calendar and List of Band Events:

- M100 Showcase (All members) - Tentative
- Pep Rallies (Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble) - Throughout the school year
- Middle School Band Night (Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble) - September/October
- Beginner Sit-In Concert (Beginners) - October
- Temple VA Hospital Performance (Jazz Band) - October
- TMEA All-Region Band Auditions AND Clinic/Concert (Wind Ensemble & some Symphonic Band members) - October/November
- Jazz Holiday Concert (Jazz Band) - December
- Christmas On the Chisholm Trail Performance (Jazz Band) - December
- Holiday Concert (All members) - December
- All-Region Jazz Band Auditions AND Clinic/Concert (Jazz Band) - January/March
- Pre-UIL Benchmark Concert (Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble) - February
- Solo Contest (All members) - February for Beginners and April for Symphonic Band & Wind Ens.
- UIL Concert & Sightreading Evaluation (Symphonic Band & Wind Ensemble) - March
- Temple Jazz Festival (Jazz Band) - March
- End-of-Year Auditions (All 6th & 7th graders) - April
- Spring Jazz Concert (Jazz Band) - April/May
- Temple College Band Invitational (Beginners) - May
- Spring Concert (All members) - May

4. Fulfill Financial Obligations

All financial obligations to the school district (including campus and its programs) must be settled by Turn-In Day in April. This includes, but is not limited to, instrument usage fees, reed charges, library/technology fines, cafeteria fees, and student ID fees.

5. Uphold Behavior Standards

Demonstrate excellent behavior throughout the school year. Eligibility requires:

- Fewer than 10 total Lunch Detentions (D-Halls) in the Spring semester
- Fewer than 4 total days of ISS/OSS (In-School/Out-of-School Suspensions) in current school year
- No placement at DAEP at any point during the current school year

Please Note: If a student loses trip privileges for any Belton MS organization, this also extends to the Belton MS Fine Arts Spring Trip. Ultimately, directors retain the final authority to determine trip eligibility, and any disruptive or undisciplined behavior may result in exclusion from the trip.

Private Lessons, Policies, & Communication

Elevate Your Musicianship with Private Lessons

Unlock your full musical potential! The Belton MS Band Private Lessons Program offers personalized, expert instruction at an affordable rate. This unique opportunity provides one-on-one coaching to significantly enhance your skills and progress.

Program Details:

- Lesson Cost: \$25 for a 25-minute session, paid directly to your instructor
- Scholarship Opportunity: Apply for a scholarship through the Belton Band Boosters to reduce the cost by half (\$12.50 per lesson, totaling \$50 per month)

Why Private Lessons Matter:

Students who engage in private lessons consistently achieve higher levels of success. You'll be significantly more likely to:

- Earn a spot in the TMEA All-Region Band
- Achieve superior ratings on solos
- Lead your instrument section
- Secure a place in the Texas All-State Band in high school, often leading to substantial college scholarships

Private lessons are a cornerstone of any exceptional band program and are highly recommended for all members aiming for excellence.

Scheduling Your Lessons:

- Lessons are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, with availability varying by instructor
- Convenient slots are offered during class time, as well as before and after school
- We are privileged to host professional musicians from across the state as our instructors. To honor their commitment and travel, we encourage students and parents to commit to lessons on a per-semester basis

Payment & Absence Policy:

- **Payment:** Parents are requested to pay for 4 lessons (one month) in advance. Payment is due at the first lesson of each month.
- **Excused Absences:** Notify your instructor directly at least 24 hours in advance for an absence to be considered excused. Make-up lessons for excused absences should be arranged solely between the student/parent and the instructor, not the band directors
- **Unexcused Absences:** If timely notice is not given for a missed lesson, payment is still expected. Any make-up session will be at the discretion of the lesson instructor

Punctuality Is Key:

Being on time is crucial to maintain our instructors' schedules and aligns with Belton MS Band's "Be Punctual" guideline. Arrive with all materials and warm-ups completed *before* your scheduled lesson time. Students who are late will forfeit their scheduled slot to the next student, and the instructor will determine an alternate lesson time. For instructor contact information and to learn more, please visit:

beltonmsband.org/private-lessons.

Activity Restrictions & Code of Conduct

Your participation in Belton MS Band activities requires adherence to our school's expectations. Please review the Extracurricular Activity Restrictions and Code of Conduct, as outlined in the Texas Education Code and the Belton ISD Student Handbook, before engaging in any band event.

- **ISS/OSS Placement:** Students placed in In-School or Out-of-School Suspension (ISS/OSS) will be suspended from all band events, both during and after school, for the duration of their placement. Directors will determine if an alternative assignment is needed to make up for missed graded activities.
- **Private Lessons During ISS:** If an ISS placement conflicts with a private lesson, the student will still be able to attend their lesson, pending campus administration approval. This will be arranged by the lesson teacher and directors.
- **Spring Trip Eligibility:** As previously noted, accumulating a combined total of 4 or more days of suspension during the current school year will result in ineligibility for the Spring Trip in May.

Band Enrollment & Re-Enrollment Policies

Our goal is to foster a consistent and thriving band community. If a student chooses to leave or withdraw from the band program, their re-enrollment in either middle school or high school band within Belton ISD will be at the discretion of the band directors.

Additionally, any band student placed in ISS, DAEP, and/or JJAEP, etc., may be subject to a change in ensemble placement or removal from the Belton Band program, also at the discretion of the band directors.

High School Band Eligibility:

To qualify for membership in either the Belton High School Band or Lake Belton High School Band, students must have successfully completed Band the previous year and performed a successful audition for the high school band directors.

Belton Band Boosters: Partnering for Success

The Belton Band Boosters are an invaluable parent organization dedicated to supporting our band programs in the Belton High School cluster. They meet regularly at Belton High School, and we warmly invite all Middle School Band parents to join this active and supportive group. Discover more about their efforts at: beltonmarching100.com/boosters

Open Communication Channels

Stay informed and connected!

- **Website:** The Belton MS Band website is your primary source for the most current information: beltonmsband.org
- **Director Communication:** Our directors are committed to frequent, positive communication. We welcome discussions with parents/guardians regarding any aspect of a student's progress in Band.
 - Chris Pulley (chris.pulley@bisd.net): Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band, Beginning Brass Specialist, Everything Financial
 - Patrick Trahan (patrick.trahan@bisd.net): Symphonic Band, Beginning Woodwind Specialist, Everything Private Lessons
 - Ian Smith (ian.smith@bisd.net): Beginning Percussion Specialist and Everything Percussion

CutTime: Your Band Hub

CutTime is our communication and management database and simplifies staying informed without login hassles or cluttered inboxes, and is used along with ParentSquare.

How to Connect with CutTime:

Look out for a text message from CutTime (via +1-844-385-8463) sent to the mobile number we have on file. This “Magic Link” is uniquely personalized, secure, and will grant you access to your CutTime Portal Page. Once connected, you can:

- View important announcements
- Explore and subscribe to events involving you and your student
- Find and sign up for volunteer opportunities
- Check account balance effortlessly

Action Required: If you haven’t yet provided a mobile phone number, please share this information with us immediately. If a mobile number isn’t an option, contact us at beltonmsband@gmail.com with your email address to ensure you receive your Magic Link.

Connect With Us: Social Media & Important Links

Stay up-to-date and celebrate our students’ achievements through our various online platforms:

- **Smore Newsletters:** smore.com/u/beltonmsband
- **Facebook Profile:** facebook.com/beltonmsband
- **YouTube Channel:** Watch performance videos! youtube.com/beltonmsband
- **SoundCloud:** Listen to reference tracks, recorded performances, and accompaniments. soundcloud.com/beltonmsband
- **Instagram Profile:** Share and tag photos of band events! instagram.com/beltonmsband

Additional Resources:

- Belton Middle School Website: bms.bisd.net
- Belton High School Marching 100 (M100) Band Website: beltonmarching100.com

Mailing Address:

Belton MS Band
1704 Sparta Road
Belton, TX 76513

Band Handbook Acceptance Form

Please read and print/sign below as indicated:

PARENTS: I have read the Belton Middle School Band Handbook and understand that I am responsible for the policies and guidelines covered in it. I understand the requirements and needs for my child's ensemble as outlined in the document.

STUDENTS: I have read the Belton Middle School Band Handbook and understand the requirements for being a band member. I realize it takes full cooperation and dedication (100% from me) to help our Band meet its potential. I will do my best to uphold the high standards and guidelines of success of the Belton MS Band, and fulfill my commitment to the organization of which I am a part. I also realize that my failure to follow policies and directions could result in disciplinary action, which could lead to placement in another ensemble or dismissal from the Belton MS Band program altogether. I have received a copy of the band calendar, and am aware that a copy also exists on the band website.

As a member of the Belton Middle School Band, I acknowledge the following core principles as responsibilities I must fulfill if I wish to remain a member. I will strive to always:

- Be Punctual
- Be Prepared
- Be Disciplined
- Be Relentless
- Be Superior

By printing your name and signing below, I am acknowledging that I have read the Band Handbook and understand the guidelines I must follow:

Date: _____.

Print Parent Name: _____.

Print Student Name: _____.

Sign Parent Name: _____.

Sign Student Name: _____.