

Valley Center Middle School Band Syllabus 2023-2024

Welcome to the Valley Center Middle School Band Program!
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Band is a co-curricular subject; therefore grades are based on both in class and out of class participation and activities. We maintain a VERY active schedule...Please stay up to date by visiting valleycenterband.com and signing up to receive email notifications. We will also communicate by sending messages out through Parent Portal.

Required Materials:

- Instrument (must be in good, working condition)
- *Count Me In: A Comprehensive Approach to Rhythm* (6th Grade)
- *Traditions of Excellence Book 1* (6th/7th Grade)
- *Traditions of Excellence Book 2* (7th/8th Grade)
- *Foundations for Superior Performance Warm Up and Technique Book* (8th Grade)
- 3 Playable Reeds (minimum), Valve Oil, Cork Grease, Stick Bags/Mallets/Drumsticks, Music, Folder, Pencils. Failure to have required materials will result in loss of daily points.
- ALL INSTRUMENTS MUST BE TAGGED with names and contact info (old luggage tags work great)

Band Member Behavior Expectations:

- Be on time. You are to be in your seat with your instrument two minutes after the bell rings.
- Be courteous and professional in all your interactions (including staff, bus drivers, other students, etc.).
- Do not talk during class. This impedes your progress as well as the progress of the people around you.
- Take care of your instrument and the band's equipment-it's expensive! (This includes putting all instruments and music away after each class. Percussion must put covers back on, keep cases picked up, and put mallets away at the end of each class).
- **No food or drink in the band room.**
- Electronics get put away-cell phones are to remain in lockers or backpacks per the Student Handbook.
- Follow all VCMS rules and regulations as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Ensembles and Playing Opportunities:

Marching Band (August through VC Fall Festival). The VCMS 7th and 8th grade band participates in the VC Fall Fest Parade **September 23rd**. It is a REQUIRED performance - dress for this event is the VC Middle School Band T-Shirt (order form at the end of the syllabus), jeans, and tennis shoes. NO DEVIATIONS unless given permission by the directors.

- This also includes middle school **drumline** and **junior color guard**, which entails **extra morning rehearsals on Monday/Wednesday from 7:00-7:35am through the Fall Festival Parade beginning August 28th**. You must provide your own transportation.
- Student athletes and cheer are still expected to participate with the band in the parade, but may wear their jerseys/cheer uniforms.

Concert Band: All members will participate in their grade level concert band. Concert dates for this year are as follows:

Oct. 24th (Fall Concert)

Dec. 11th (Christmas Dinacert)

Feb. 20th OR Feb. 29th (Pre-Contest Concert)

Feb. 28th OR Mar. 6th (WSL League Music Festival in Goddard)

May 8th (Mass Band - District Wide Concert)

All performances are required- band members will need to obtain "concert black" for the performances. (Black dress pants, black shirts (shoulders must be covered/no backless shirts), black socks, black shoes.

Jazz Ensemble (Optional) meets before school at 7:00 AM on Tuesday and Thursday starting at the beginning of second semester. This is open to any 7th and 8th grade middle school band member. Students are responsible for purchasing the **Standard of Excellence Jazz Band Method Book** for their particular instrument. Books are part specific (trumpet 1, 2, 3, etc.), so please do NOT purchase the book until parts have been assigned. Students must provide their own transportation, or make sure the bus will drop them off at the school early enough to make rehearsal.

Wichita Suburban League (WSL) Honor Band: Top students will be nominated by the directors to participate in the Wichita Suburban League Honor Band. This band is made up of the best middle school band students from area middle schools.

WSL Contest: Held the same day as the Middle School Festival in the spring, students can prepare a short solo or ensemble (three or more people) to play in front of a judge for feedback. An accompanist is usually required-accompanist fees must be paid by the parents before the contest date. Prices vary depending upon accompanist.

Other Honor Ensembles: There are many other non-KMEA, non-KSHAA sponsored playing opportunities in the area; Wichita Youth Orchestra, Sousa Band, etc. Directors will supply information as it is received, but the school and/or band program cannot pay any associated expenses (entry fees, uniform/travel expenses, etc).

Grading Policies:

Grades are weighted within the following categories: Performances (30%), Daily Points (50%), Tests/Quizzes/Practice Cards (20%).

Performances are the band world's version of assessments. They are a chance for us to show off our hard work, as well as the skills we've learned together. Performances set a base-line standard from which we can improve upon...therefore, they are a REQUIRED part of this class, and may only be excused for extreme, unforeseen circumstances (family death, severe illness - see the attendance policy below for more information regarding performances). In addition to attendance, performance points can be lost for wearing the wrong or inappropriate attire (includes concert blacks or your show shirt during marching band) or being disruptive during warm up time. Work, lack of transportation, and birthday parties (among other things) are not excused absences and will result in a 0.

Daily Points are given for behavior and for having all needed materials in rehearsal and class time. Please refrain from talking, using electronics, and eating/drinking (other than water). Chrome books are to be left in student backpacks in the band room unless otherwise directed. School policy on phones is always in effect which means they are to remain in lockers or backpacks and out of sight unless it's a passing period. Being tardy or having an unexcused absence will result in daily point deductions as well. Generally the first infraction is 2 points off, and is doubled for each infraction after that. Tardies are a 5 point deduction, unexcused absences/no instrument are a 10 point deduction (loss of all daily points).

Quizzes/Practice Cards: Tests and Quizzes consist of playing and written exams. This category also includes practice cards. Students are asked to complete 20 minutes of practice each day, track their time, then turn it in for a grade. Parents must sign the practice cards for credit to be given.

Extra Credit: Given at the discretion of the directors. May include participation in extra ensembles (honor band, jazz band, etc.), or attending a concert outside of the district. Extra credit will not be given to raise a grade lowered due to an unexcused absence.

Attendance and Tardy Policies:

During the School Day: Students must be in the classroom when the bell rings, otherwise they are considered “tardy.” Students will then have two minutes from the time the bell rings to get their materials ready and be in their seat. Failure to be ready on time will result in loss of daily points. Unexcused absences may result in loss of daily points as well (please see grading policies above).

For Optional Groups (Jazz Band, Color Guard, Drumline): While these groups are optional, attendance is still mandatory. Students need to be up front with their parents about the time commitment for these groups, and directors will make every effort to communicate with the parents as well. Bus students can usually make rehearsals on time, provided that they come straight to the band room once getting off the bus. Two unexcused absences will result in removal from the optional ensemble.

For Performances: Call times will be issued for each performance - being late to a call time will result in a loss of some performance points. Band athletes who miss for a sporting event will be required to play their parts for a director in order to receive credit for the missed event. It is the student’s responsibility to arrange this meeting. If there is any way for a student to participate in both events, we ask that those arrangements be made. Unexcused absences and/or no parent contact from an absence will result in a 0. Missing for work, not having a ride, or forgetting a performance are examples of unexcused absences and will result in a 0. Call times for performances are usually one hour prior to the performance time.

Band Fees:

Extra financial obligations include district charged fees and band user fees.

District Charged Fees:

\$25/month-district instrument rental fee (anyone using a school owned instrument or equipment. This does include percussion students, as they are using school timpani, vibes, xylophones, toms, cymbals, etc.). Please note that this covers normal “wear and tear” only (examples: sticky valves, replacing pads every 4-5 years, loose or missing screws).

If a student is found misusing or damaging a school instrument beyond what would be considered normal (examples: dropping the instrument, sitting on an instrument, leaving it in an extremely hot or extremely cold car causing major damage to woodwind pads and brass valves, throwing or otherwise being rough with the instrument), the financial obligations for repair fall to the student and his/her family.

**This is a board approved, district fee. Please direct any questions to our school bookkeeper.

Band User Fees:

\$15-Band shirt (required by ALL students - same shirt design as last year, so 8th grade students should not need to reorder unless their shirt does not fit).

Damaged Music Fees: Students can and will be charged the replacement cost of music should it become lost, torn, or damaged beyond use. Please be aware that some parts cannot be purchased individually - if that were the case, the replacement cost for the entire set of music would be charged (\$50 and up!)

Instrument Care and Storage:

Instruments should be maintained, cleaned properly, and brought to school in working condition. Occasionally, all instruments will need some type of repair or adjustment. If there is a problem with an instrument we recommend taking it to Senseney Music, Damm Music, or Lighthouse Music in Bel Aire. They offer prompt repair service at affordable prices. Please make sure when taking an instrument in to be repaired that the dealer can furnish a loaner instrument, or that other arrangements are made to get the student a loaner instrument so that the student will not miss valuable rehearsal time.

Instrumental repair may not be a valid excuse for missing class time unless cleared with the directors. District owned instruments are provided in working condition and it is the responsibility of the students to provide general maintenance and up-keep.

All students will be issued a band cubby. Students may bring their instruments to their band cubby each morning. We encourage all students to take their instruments home to practice each night. However, we understand that there will be nights when the students have other commitments and will not be able to practice. All students **must** take their instrument home on weekends and over school holidays. Students should have their names on everything that belongs to them including instruments, music, folders, cases, sticks, books, mutes and any other supplies that could be misplaced. Luggage tags work great for labeling instruments!

THE SCHOOL AND DIRECTORS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHERE EVERYTHING IS AT ALL TIMES!

Grades and Eligibility:

Every student is responsible for his or her own grade and is expected to monitor it regularly. Students are also expected to keep their parents updated on their progress. Parents can check grades on-line through Parent Portal. Grades will be posted at the end of each week.

Eligibility is monitored by the middle school activities director as mandated by the Kansas State High School Activities Association. Students who are failing two or more classes at the end of each nine weeks are declared ineligible until the next nine-week quarter. While ineligible students may still attend concerts and other school-sponsored activities, they may not participate in any Wichita Suburban League events. This can also affect participation in sports and other activities.

Fundraising:

We do one item fundraiser per year in November to allow students a chance to start putting money in their individual band accounts. The money put into individual accounts follows them up to the high school level where it can be used to pay for the larger band trips, marching band shoes, etc. This year's fundraiser is sponsored by Great American Fundraising. Students will be selling popcorn and frozen foods - information will be sent home regarding brochures and sales forms at a later date.

Valley Center Middle School Band 2023-2024 Release Form/T-Shirt Order Form

We, the parents and band students, have reviewed the Valley Center Middle School Instrumental Music Program Handbook and agree to comply with the guidelines and expectations. We also understand the financial obligations involved and agree to meet those obligations in a prompt manner.

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

BAND T-SHIRT (\$15.00) (Required for ALL 7th grade students and new 8th grade students. Current 8th graders, please make sure your shirts fit from last year!)

T-Shirt Size and Quantity (Adult Sizes)

_____S _____M

_____L _____XL

_____XXL _____XXXL

_____ I have my t-shirt from last year, so I do not need a new one!

Please Make Checks Payable to VCMS and put "Band T-Shirt" in the memo line. Money is due by Wednesday, August 31st!