

Advanced Band Handbook 2019-2020



VANSTON BAND

**JENNIFER BORDERS, DIRECTOR OF BANDS
KRIS STILL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
ANDREW POUTTU, PERCUSSION SPECIALIST**

Dear Band Parents and Students:

Welcome back for your veteran year in the Vanston Middle School Band! This is an exciting year where we build upon what you learned in beginner class as well as prepare you for high school band!! One of the best things you will enjoy about your 2nd year in band is the increased number of performances and competition opportunities.

Did you know that last year the 8th grade band had 30 students in the Mesquite All-City Band, several students in the Region 3 All-Region band, 3 cheerleaders, 9 football players, 7 volleyball players, 10 basketball players, the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of Student Council, several members of the National Junior Honor Society, 8 AVID members, 100+ Solo and Ensemble medals, and the majority of the Band was in GT or Pre-AP classes? The Vanston Band has also received the prestigious Sweepstakes Award at UIL multiple times in the last few years. Sounds like you have big shoes to fill here at Vanston. However, I strongly believe that you have the ability and talent to surpass bands before you and be the best band Vanston has ever seen!!

Thanks for taking the time to re-familiarize yourself with our policies and expectations. On the next several pages you and your parents will find information that explains how the Vanston Band operates. This handbook may not answer all of your questions, so when you have additional questions, feel free to contact me at the number or email below.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Borders & Kris Still
Band Directors
Vanston Middle School
972-882-5835
jborders@mesquiteisd.org
www.vanstonband.com



I. Expectations of Band Students

The success and excellence of the Vanston Band Program is dependent upon a well-disciplined and motivated band student. In order for rehearsals to be effective there must be a quiet and attentive atmosphere in the classroom.

Behavior

- Students should not talk when a director is talking.
- Gum, food, drinks or candy are not allowed in the band hall at any time.
- Only current band students are allowed in the band hall.
- Practice rooms are for practice only
- If no rehearsal is taking place, please consider the band hall a quiet place reserved for practice only. Absolutely no running or horseplay in the band hall.
- **Behavior during rehearsal:**
 - o The primary use of the band hall is for rehearsals. Never do anything that would interrupt a rehearsal. Examples of disruptions include: talking, waving, walking in front of a group that is rehearsing, etc.
 - o Be in the room when class time begins
 - o Be set-up and ready to rehearse by the designated time
 - o All students are expected to be courteous and respectful to their classmates, directors, and private lesson instructors. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
 - o Quiet and attentive behavior

Equipment

- Come to class prepared with all supplies. This includes:
 - o An instrument that is in good working condition
 - o A pencil to mark music
 - o 4 good working reeds (all reed players)
 - o Valve/slide oil (all brass players)
 - o Binder with all music
- Damaging or defacing any part of the band hall or equipment will not be tolerated. If any damage occurs disciplinary action will be taken and student will be responsible for repair and/or replacement costs.
- Students are not to play on or use any other instruments or belongings, other than their own
- All instruments will be stored in assigned lockers during the school day
- All instruments will go home every day.
- NEVER leave your instrument unattended. Do not drop off instruments in the hallway outside the band hall. Students will not be able to enter the band hall until 8:15.
- Music stands are for music only. Please do not use them as a foot rest or desk.
- Do not handle stereo, tuners, metronomes, pianos, etc. without a director's permission.



Students who do not meet the above expectations will follow the following consequences:

- 1st time – Writing Sentences and Warning
- 2nd time – Writing Sentences/Parent contact & 30 Minute Detention
- 3rd time – Writing Sentences/Parent contact & 60 Minute Detention
- 4th time – Office referral

II. Attendance

Rehearsals and Concerts

Some rehearsals and most concerts are held outside of the school day. Attendance is expected and absences will be reflected in the student's grade. If there is a conflict, the band director should be given ample notice. Please refrain from scheduling a routine doctor or dentist appointment at the same time as a scheduled event. The most current calendar can be found on our website at <http://www.vanstonband.com/>.

Contests

The culmination of your child's efforts to learn to play a band instrument leads to his/her participation in a contest or concert; therefore, each student is expected to prepare and participate at every opportunity he/she is given. There are certain eligibility deadlines for each six weeks, and only students who are eligible may attend contests.

Sectionals

All 2nd year band students will have at least one weekly section rehearsal with their band's section. Students are expected to be punctual and prepared. Absence from sectionals must be in accordance with the attendance policy. Students must make every effort to attend. Section rehearsals are an extension of the classroom and are graded accordingly. Sectional schedules may be found on the band website or by contacting the student's director. Sectionals will be either 7:20-8:20am or 3:45-4:45pm.

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

Absence from Sectionals

An **Excused absence** can be made up by individual practice for **ONE** hour at school (in addition to weekly practice requirements) or attending a similar instrument sectional (with director approval). An **Unexcused absence** can be made up by individual practice in the band hall for **TWO** hours. Students who miss a sectional (excused or unexcused) have one week after they return to school to make up the missed sectional. After a week, the absence will be considered unexcused and a grade of zero will be recorded. **Sectionals will begin on Monday, August 26th.**



III. Grades

Grading System

30% - Daily participation

Includes: Instrument, music supplies and class work

50% - Tests and Extension of Class

Includes: Playing and written tests, objective sheets, concerts, and sectionals

20% - Practice records

Weekly assignment sheets due each Tuesday that will be signed by a parent.



Objective sheets

Objective sheets will be done periodically throughout the year. These objectives will be a list of playing and/or written criteria each student must meet. These objectives are meant to challenge each student and everyone is expected to complete the objectives to the best of their ability.

Assignment Sheets

In order to be successful on an instrument, practice must take place on a daily basis.

Set up a daily schedule to ensure that practice is an important part of your day.

- 210 minutes of practice time per week for the 2nd year Band students.

- Extra credit for more than required amount of time.
- Assignment sheets must be turned in signed each Thursday during class.
- 10 points will be deducted for each day a practice record is turned in late.
- Assignment sheets will not be accepted more than 3 days late.
- Assignment sheets that do not have assignments written in or parent signatures will not be accepted.
- Extra assignment sheets can be found by the Band office at any time.



PARENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED IF ASSIGNMENT SHEETS ARE NOT TURNED IN REGULARLY

IV. Instruments

School owned instruments

Students needing a tuba, euphonium, horn, baritone saxophone, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet, oboe or bassoon will be assigned an instrument at the beginning of the year. These instruments are to be returned in proper condition at the conclusion of the year. The care and maintenance of the assigned instrument are the responsibility of the student to whom the instrument is checked out.

Repairs for any damage occurring as a result of accidents, carelessness, or lack of proper upkeep will be the responsibility of the student. MISD does not carry liability insurance, therefore the student is responsible if a school-owned instrument is lost or stolen while in their student's care. Any equipment used should receive the utmost in care by the students using them. Mesquite ISD does not charge a fee for the use of school owned instruments.

Individually owned instruments

A quality band program requires quality materials and instruments. Students are required to purchase all necessary materials for their instruments to insure quality playing condition (i.e. mouthpieces, reeds, valve oil, drum sticks, mallets, etc.) As a student becomes a more proficient musician, the need for a professional quality instrument is desirable. In many cases, professional quality instruments are purchased during the student's 8th or 9th grade year. **Please check with the directors and/or lesson teacher before purchasing a step-up instrument to discuss recommended brands, models, availability, and cost.**

Instrument storage

Each student will be provided with an instrument locker. All instruments should be in the appropriate locker when not in use. The lockers are for instrument storage only and therefore should not serve as a "second school locker". Personal Instruments are not to be stored in the lockers overnight. Students should take their instruments home on a daily basis. Neither the Band Directors nor Vanston M.S. is responsible for instruments left in lockers. **There are not enough lockers for everyone so many students may need to share.

Locks for Lockers

Students will be issued a combination lock to use on their band locker. These locks are only to be used on the band locker. Locks are free of charge but students will be charged \$10 for a lost lock.



V. Materials

Band Fee

DUE Friday, September 6th

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Method Book (will also be used in HS)	\$7.00 (\$9.00 for Percussion)
Piano Fee (only for wind players)	\$20.00
Band Black dress shirt	\$18.00
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Total for Wind Players	\$45.00
Total for Percussionists	\$27.00

If you need a new tuner/pickup the cost is:

Korg CA Tuner/met combo (will also be used in HS)	\$18.00
Korg CM-200BK Pick-up (will also be used in HS)	\$8.00

Cash or check is accepted. Checks must be made out to Vanston Band.

If you are unable to pay the Supply fee, need additional time, or would like to make payments please contact Mrs. Borders

Additional Costs

Our spring trip will cost around \$45 and will be due around Spring Break.

Uniform

Advanced Band will have 2 uniforms:

1. Blue jeans and Band polo shirt (same shirt purchased in beginner band)

This uniform will be worn to football games and Spring Festival contest

If you need a new band polo shirt the cost is \$17

2. Formal uniform which will include black dress shirt, black pants, black socks. These items will be purchased by the student. **These formal uniform items need to be purchased by our first concert performance on October 29th.**

Instrument Supplies

Students are expected to have all necessary supplies to make their instrument work on a daily basis.

A detailed supply list for each instrument can be found at www.vanstonband.com.

Music

All music issued to students should be kept in the band binder provided in the supply fee. Students will be responsible for their music and will be required to pay replacement costs for lost or destroyed music.

Music checks will be held periodically to see if students have the correct music and if students are marking

(in pencil) the music according to instructions given in class. Music will be stored in the in the band hall in the music cases during the school day. **Music should never be stored in the case in direct contact with the instrument as this can cause damage to the instrument.**

VI. Private Lessons

All students are encouraged to take private lessons in order to improve their individual playing skills. While we, as directors, are skilled instructors on the various instruments in the band, there is simply no substitution for private instruction received from someone who is considered to be a professional performer on a particular instrument. We are extremely fortunate in Mesquite to have numerous professional private lesson teachers available to help students reach that “next level” of performance. Many of the private teachers are or have been affiliated with the many professional performing groups located in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area such as the Dallas Wind Symphony, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Worth Ballet, etc. The Band Directors will assist band students in scheduling lessons with the qualified teachers; however, we suggest you be aggressive in “locking in” with a teacher as soon as possible. Private lessons are a must for serious band students. Individual instruction from a qualified specialist on an individual musical instrument can make “all the difference” in a student’s progress on his musical instrument, thus making for a more enjoyable experience in Band. Scholarship money is available to those students in need.



To sign up for lessons go to tiny.cc/vmslessons

For lesson scholarship please go to tiny.cc/vmslessonhelp

VII. Travel Guidelines

The band will frequently travel on school buses for contests and trips. Students are expected to conduct themselves at the highest level on any trip. Students who have been subject to school-level discipline during the course of the school year may be deemed ineligible to participate in non-UIL field trips, at the discretion of the directors and/or campus administration.

Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with his/her parent must notify a director in writing with parent signature, prior to the event. Permission will be granted or denied based on the circumstances of the occasion.

Chaperones

Adult chaperones must be MISD approved volunteers and are a great asset to the band program. Students will treat them as an extension of the band staff. Proper respect will be shown to all adults at all times. If you would like to become a chaperone please go to www.mesquiteisd.org and apply to be an approved volunteer.

Spring Trip

Every year the band takes a trip in May. This trip rewards the students for all of their hard work throughout the school year. This year advanced band students will either be going to Six Flags or Epic Waters

In order to participate in these trips, the students must do the following:

- **Students must pass the 4th and 5th six weeks with a 70 or higher in every class.**
- **Turn in all medical release forms and permission slips**
- **Must attend UIL Contest**
- **Must attend scheduled sectionals and extra rehearsals**
- **Must attend Solo and Ensemble Contest**
- **Cannot have any major disciplinary issues throughout the school year.**

Ways to Stay Connected and Contact Information

Band Website – www.vanstonband.com

Instagram – follow us @vanstonband

Facebook – facebook.com/vanstonvikingband

Remind text messages Honors Band text @vmshonors to 81010

Symphonic Band text @vmssymphon to 81010

Concert Band text @vmsconcer to 81010

Band Director Contact Information:

Jennifer Borders

Vanston Middle School
3230 Karla Dr.
Mesquite, TX 75150

email: jborders@mesquiteisd.org
band office phone: 972-882-5835
main office phone: 972-882-5801

Kris Still

Beginner Trumpet, Horn,
Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba
Symphonic Band & Concert Band

email: kstill@mesquiteisd.org
office phone: 972-882-5835

Andrew Pouttu

Percussion Director

email: apouttu@mesquiteisd.org
office phone: 972-882-7935 ext. 4