

Beginner Band Handbook 2019-2020



BEGINNER BAND

Jennifer Borders, Director of Bands

Kris Still, Associate Director

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Dear Band Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year and the Vanston Middle School Beginner Band! You are now part of a fantastic organization. In the Vanston Middle School Band you will be surrounded by the best and brightest students at VMS. Band will help you to learn leadership skills, teamwork, organizational skills, respect for your classmates, competitive skills, and provide an appreciation for music. **In 2018-2019 Vanston Band students played every sport at VMS, held offices in Student Council, participated in cheerleading, and also performed with the choir and orchestra!**

You are beginning an exciting process that will lead you through much success all the way to graduation at North Mesquite High School. Every year band gets more and more exciting – welcome to the foundation year! Did you know that the average SAT score of a North Mesquite Band student is almost 100 points higher than other students at NMHS? Band students at Vanston and North Mesquite High School are given many opportunities that allow for great success.

We are so excited you are here!! You are going to make an excellent addition to our program.

Thanks for taking the time to familiarize yourself with our program. 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.

Looking forward to a fantastic year!

Jennifer Borders & Kris Still

Directors

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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 8:15am.
- 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

During the Spring Semester, Beginner Band students have the opportunity to attend several individual and group competitions. You must be eligible (passing all of your classes on the previous report card) to attend some events, so make sure to complete and turn in all of your assignments. You will receive a Band Calendar for your convenience and reminders will be given well before every band event. The most current calendar can be found on our website at 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. Mrs. Borders will have a current list of all students unable to perform due to eligibility.



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

Students will be given a paper practice record each week that will be signed by a parent for a grade.



Objective sheets/Checklists

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.

- 140 minutes of practice time per week for beginning band students.

- Extra credit for more than required amount of time.

- Assignment sheets will be turned in during class each week on Thursday.

- 10 points will be deducted for each day the practice record is turned in late.

- Assignment sheets will not be accepted more than 3 days late.

- Assignment sheets without daily assignments & parent signature written in will not be accepted.

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

Parents can help their children succeed at home by:

- **Providing a quiet place in which to practice**
- **Remaining nearby during practice times as often as possible, and requesting “mini concerts” for family and friends periodically**
- **Scheduling a consistent daily time for practice**
- **Praising their child’s efforts and achievements**



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 up-keep 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 or 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. Lost or broken locks will be \$10 to replace.

V. Materials

Band Fee

DUE Friday, September 6th

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Black Binder	\$1.00
Vanston Band Instrument Tag	\$1.00
Method Book	\$10.00
Band Polo Shirt	\$17.00
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
Total for Wind Players	\$55.00

Percussion don't need a pickup, and use a different method book - Percussion supply fee is \$37.00

The Beginner Band supply fee is \$55

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

In the Spring students will have a piano accompaniment fee of \$15 that will be due at the end of April. Our spring trip to Epic Waters is usually around \$40 per student and will be due before Spring Break.

Uniform

All band members must wear the designated band uniform to be allowed to perform with the group.

Band polo shirt – purchased from Mrs. Borders as part of the supply fee.

Khaki pants

Instrument Supplies

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

Beginner band students should have an instrument and all supplies to make their instrument work no later than Aug. 28th. A supply list for each instrument can be found at www.vanstonband.com

Music

All music issued to students should be kept in a black band binder and maintained in good condition. 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 band hall in the lockers 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 or 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 students will perform and spend the day at [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 Beginner Band Festival**
- **Must attend scheduled after school 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 – text @vms2026 to 81010

Band Director Contact Information:

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