

Orange High School Band

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Dear 8th Grade Band Parents:

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of you to the Orange High School Instrumental Music Department. We have a number of musical opportunities to further improve students' mastery of their wind or percussion instrument. This is just a brief overview of the program at both high schools, please read the information carefully and discuss with your child what musical opportunities they would like to take advantage of as they enter 9th grade next year. After you have read the enclosed information, you may have a few questions or concerns you would like to discuss with us. I am available through the email and phone number listed above. Please do not hesitate to contact me with your questions, but please direct questions to the director at the school your child will be attending next year. I look forward to meeting each of you and working with you and your child.

How High School Band Works

Orange County High Schools are on a block schedule. This means that each semester students will take 4 classes which will meet for 85-90 minutes each. This schedule offers a great deal of flexibility for the students because they are able to take 32 classes over the course of their high school career. Band classes are double blocked, meaning that you will take band all year, and receive 2 units of credit.

Placement in the band classes at each high school differs slightly based on the needs of the master schedule and each band director's teaching load. Orange High School offers to concert groups, Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band. The Wind Ensemble is the most advanced of the band classes offered at the high school and acceptance in that group is based upon a competitive audition. Audition materials will be distributed to your child's band director sometime in the next two months. Students not interested in auditioning, or students not accepted into the Wind Ensemble will simply be placed in the Symphonic Band to continue their musical studies. No audition is necessary to participate in Symphonic Band at OHS. When registering for classes all rising 9th graders register for Band I, regardless of their intent to audition for Wind Ensemble.

Jazz instruction is based on schedules within the school day and will be determined when next school year starts. There is no registration needed for jazz band. The flexibility of high school block scheduling will allow for jazz instruction to become part of the regular school day band classes. Currently, Jazz I is taught during Wind Ensemble and Jazz II is taught during Symphonic Band. There is a "0" period class which meets at pre-determined times before and after school. This class is call Jazz Ensemble, but focuses on the more specific elements of jazz such as combo literature, history and the art of improvisation.

All students who are enrolled in wind ensemble, and symphonic band, are also highly encouraged to participate in marching band during the fall semester. Marching Band offers a performance opportunity unlike any other within the regular band curriculum. Emphasis on theatrical performance and competition offer an education in musical performance and fosters life skills unlike any other organization on campus. Students who participate in the marching band, receive an additional 1 unit of academic credit per semester, meaning that by graduation, students who participate in marching band for four years receive 4 units of additional graduation credit, potentially 36 units total as a graduating senior instead of the standard 32 units.

When rising 9th Grade students register for classes they are to check the line beside Band I and Band IS which ensures their registration in band both semesters. They are also to check the line beside Marching Band if they would like to be a part of the marching band at their respective school.