

# Bellingham Memorial School 5th Grade Beginning Band



Syllabus and Handbook  
2018–2019

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## Bellingham High School 5th Grade Band

**Course Description:** 5th Grade Band addresses the Massachusetts Music Frameworks with emphasis on standards 1, 2, 3, 5 and Fine Arts Connections Strands 6 – 8. Concepts taught in this course include tone production, reading notation, elements of meter and rhythm and performing as part of a large instrumental ensemble. Students will be exposed to and perform various musical styles and literature. Students are expected to attend all concerts and performances as part of the grading requirements.

While we embrace the spirit of the 10 content standards, we acknowledge that not all standards should be applied to all classes. The course “8th Grade Band” is an elective course. Performance-oriented classes like band and chorus focus on the standards relating to performing, listening, and analyzing music. The 10 music standards for Massachusetts are listed below. Please realize that several of these standards are explored more in depth than others. These standards are outlined in a more detailed format, taken directly from the Massachusetts Frameworks.

1. Students will sing with correct technique alone and with others a varied repertoire of music.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to read and instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves by describing how the elements of music are used.  
Students will read and sing at sight moderately difficult melodies, all intervals and their inversions from unison through an octave, and triads and their inversions in arpeggiated form.  
Students will in a choral/instrumental ensemble or class: sight-read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 3 on a scale of 1 to 6.
3. Students will perform with expression and technical accuracy a large repertoire of solo and ensemble literature representing various genres, styles, and cultural and historical periods with a level of difficulty of 4 on a scale of 1 to 6.  
Students will perform an appropriate part in an ensemble, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills.  
Students will perform in small ensemble with one student on a part.
4. Students will improvise, arrange, and compose music of various styles and genres.
5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how musical elements interact to create expressiveness in music.  
Students will demonstrate knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music.  
Students will listen to performances of extended length and complexity with proper attention and audience protocol.  
Students will analyze and describe the uses of elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive.  
Students will demonstrate the ability to perceive, remember, and describe in detail significant occurrences in a given aural example.  
Students will compare and contrast ways in which compositional devices and techniques are used in two or more examples of the same piece, genre, or style.
6. Students will interpret the meanings of artistic works based on evidence from artists’ biographies, autobiographies, or video-taped or written interviews.  
Students will describe and analyze examples of art forms that integrate practical functions with aesthetic concerns.
7. Students will analyze how the arts and artists are portrayed in contemporary newspapers, magazines, films, and electronic media.  
Students will describe various roles that artists serve, cite representative individuals who have functioned in these roles, and describe their activities and achievements.  
Students will describe the roles of individual patrons, cultural organizations, and governments in commissioning and collecting works and presenting performances.
8. Students will classify works from the United States and world cultures by genre, style, and historical period; explain why the works exemplify a particular genre, style, or period.  
Students will identify works, genres, or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, and describe how the traditions are manifested in the work.
9. Students will identify and describe examples of how technological development in one artistic domain can influence work in other artistic domain.  
Students will compare the available materials, inventions, and technologies of two historical periods or cultures and explain their effect on the arts.  
Students will identify and describe the examples of the persistence of traditional historical materials and technologies in contemporary artworks.
10. Students will continue the above and apply knowledge of cultural institutions to learning in the arts and other disciplines.

## Calendar of Performances and Events

All music performances and department events are posted on the music website. Families should take time to note the specific performances and times of events throughout the school year. Very few changes will be made, if any, to this calendar. The music staff will give advance notice whenever possible if there is a change of time or date to a particular event. The calendar posted online will always be the most accurate and up-to-date calendar. Any cancellations due to weather, school closings, or unforeseen circumstances will be posted on the music website and on the Bellingham Music Facebook page. Please use the calendar at [www.BellinghamMusic.org](http://www.BellinghamMusic.org) for a full listing of concerts. Listed below is a brief summary of events:

### **BMS Bands Winter Concert:**

December TBD, 7:00 p.m. BHS Auditorium

### **All Town Band Concert:**

March or April TBD, 7:00 p.m. BHS GYM

### **BMS Spring Concert (5th Grade Band, 6th Grade Band, & BMS Jazz Band):**

June TBD, 7:00 p.m. BHS Auditorium

There are other concerts throughout the year that involve the other grades of students, those dates can be found on the music website. We invite you to bring your children and be a part of our audiences because we want the younger students to see what they have to look forward to!

## Add/Drop Policy

All students who choose to participate in band are expected to participate from fall through the winter concert in December. If they wish to stop participating in band after the winter concert, a parent/guardian must contact Mr. MacDonald about the student's desire to drop band. Then Mr. MacDonald can work together with parent/guardian and guidance counselor to adjust the student's schedule accordingly. Once school resumes after winter break in January, students in band are in for the remainder of the school year. At the end of the school year when students receive course selection forms for the following school year, the teacher recommendation signature and then a parent signature is required to continue with the band program.

## Daily Homework = Daily Practice

Each student is expected to practice his/her instrument at home on a regular basis. **Daily practice IS the homework for this course.** Regular practice on each instrument is crucial to improvement in endurance, range, tone, intonation, technique, rhythm, and expression. Practice should be regular, intelligent, and consistent. Twenty minutes of practice each day is better than two hours of practice once or twice a week. Even if you know your music well there is always room for improvement on other areas or concepts for your instrument.

Here are some tips to help with your practice sessions:

- Each week, the Band Director will post homework assignments for at-home practice. These assignments correspond to the literature and rehearsal schedule for the week. It is strongly recommended that students check these schedules to prepare for class rehearsal and assessments.
- Schedule a regular practice time. Parents can help by reminding their students of this!
- Set up a place in your home to practice – someplace quiet and without many interruptions.
- If you're having problems working out a passage, stop and think! Try it slowly, try clapping or counting the rhythms, break it into smaller sections, ask your section leader or Director for help.
- Always use a metronome when practicing. Mr. MacDonald will give you metronome markings in class if they are not indicated in the music. If you don't have a metronome, all smart devices have metronome apps. You may also purchase a metronome from our local vendor.

## Grading

Students in our Beginning Band will receive a grade every term. Students will be assessed using the following indicators:

- **Lesson Attendance** - All students must attend their weekly lesson so that they can learn the basics and advance their skills on their instruments.
- **Concert Attendance** - All students must attend concerts in order to fully participate in the curriculum. We all have a part to play!
- **Musical Preparation for Band and Lessons** - Practice your assigned music so that it is prepared for either band or instrument lessons.
- **Band Karate!** - Here in Bellingham, we use a band method book series called *Essential Elements*. Students will use the beginning book for both 5th and 6th Grade. Mr. MacDonald will use certain songs or exercises from the book as "band karate belt songs". Once a student has learned how to play all music up to that song and performs the assigned "belt song" for Mr. MacDonald, the student will receive a Band Karate colored belt indicating their level of mastery!

**Please Note:** Concert attendance is mandatory! This class is a performance based art, therefore part of the grade is derived from performing together as a group. If a student needs a ride to the concert, please let Mr. MacDonald know so we can coordinate a carpool situation so that your child can still participate in our concert. Concert absences will be excused only in the event of serious illness or family emergency, and a student will come after school to play their music with Mr. MacDonald as their make-up assignment.

## Band Expectations

### **Attendance**

1. Rehearsals – You are required to be in rehearsal if you are in school that day
2. Concerts – You are required to participate in our concerts. Please notify your parents of the dates and times now so that there will be no conflicts.
3. Please use the bathroom prior to or following class. Every minute of rehearsal time is precious. If you need to use the bathroom during class, students will sign out of class, take a pass, and sign back in. This procedure is to ensure that we know where students are at all times.

## Rehearsal Protocol

The following rehearsal protocol should be observed:

- Each musician should be in his/her seat, ready to play prior to the downbeat.
- Music should be placed in rehearsal order, with a **pencil** on the stand for marking dynamics, phrasing, directions, etc.
- When the director steps onto the podium, all talking and playing stops.
- Sit on the front half of your chair with proper posture.
- Play only when asked to do so; otherwise listen attentively – chances are you'll hear something important being said or can learn from what others are playing.
- Remain in your seat during the entire rehearsal.
- Raise your hand when you have a question.
- Put away all music, equipment, instruments and accessories at the end of the rehearsal. Do not leave personal belongings in the music rooms outside of student lockers.

## Behavior

1. Respect each other. No name-calling, putting down, or whispering.
2. Do YOUR best. Everyone has their own beginning point.
3. Abide by school rules at all times.
4. Please do not talk when Mr. MacDonald is giving instructions. Thank you!
5. Enjoy making music together. Sometimes we get caught up in wanting to get better that we forget to enjoy the growing process as much as the resulting concert!

## Discipline

1. Neither food nor gum is allowed in class, as they may become choking hazards in this activity.
2. I'm excited to have you in band and want you to stay here. If, for whatever reason, something has disturbed you in class, please feel free to talk with me or contact the guidance counselor for further assistance. Our classroom should be a safe environment for you.

## Concert Attire

In order to produce a professional appearance, you are asked to wear the following to all performances:

- Girls: White blouse/shirt, black pants/skirt (below the knees when sitting), black shoes
- Boys: White collared dress shirt, black pants, black shoes and socks

## Instruments and Equipment

Some students may borrow large school-owned instruments on which to perform. Instruments borrowed from the school are loaned at no cost BUT **the student and his/her family must be responsible for all maintenance and repair costs**. These instruments will be loaned out in good playing condition and must be returned in the same manner. Any school-owned instrument that requires repair must be sent out to repair by the Director. No student should take any school instrument to any repair shop unless the Director approves it. And of course, no student should ever try to repair an instrument by his/herself - in most cases the instrument will be further damaged and the repair cost even greater in the end.

- **School-owned instruments** should be carefully maintained in insure they remain in top playing condition. This maintenance may include oiling valves, greasing slides, swabbing, polishing, etc. Instruments must be stored properly in cases and stored on shelves or in music lockers when not in use.
- **Student-owned instruments** may be repaired by a technician of the student's choice, most likely the vendor from which you purchased or rented. We do, however, have service technicians that will pick up

and drop off instrument for repair directly to the school, saving the family a trip to the music store. Any student who needs some repair on their instrument should see the Director for a repair tag. It will be placed in the music office to wait for the proper technician. The repair bill will be emailed to the student's family or available by calling the vendor's store. Please note that some vendors may call the student directly with the cost and a parent/guardian can pay the cost over the phone with a credit card.

**Equipment** – Throughout the year, students may need to purchase equipment for their instruments: oil, reeds, straps, swabs, etc. Students can make this purchase easier by filling out order forms from a local vendor. These local vendors will deliver to the school – saving student's time and energy. Order forms can be obtained from Mr. MacDonald. Students should return these forms with proper payment. Mr. MacDonald will order the necessary items and it will usually be delivered within a few days time to the school.

**Music Binder System** – Students will need a three ring binder for class. In this binder, they should always bring their music (three hole punched in the binder), pencils, and their Essential Elements Method Book. Binder checks will occur frequently as part of the preparation portion of each student's grade. Students should put their first/last name and homeroom number on their binder and everything inside of it in case something lost needs to be returned to the owner. This cuts down on "lost and found" piles at the end of the school year.

**Band Hallway "Parking Lot"** – On days when we have band rehearsal, as you enter the hallway outside the band room students will need to look for their "parking spot". There will be signs for each instrument, and students will park their cases in their instrument parking zone. The parking lot eliminates students bringing extra things into the band room and allows for more space for the band/percussion setup. Cases take up space, so we don't want to band room crowded with cases; only students and their instruments!

## Private Music Lessons

Private lessons are an important part of a young musician's development. As a student progresses through middle school and into high school band, the demands on the student musician become greater as the music becomes more complex. Having a private teacher to turn to with questions and to closely monitor the continued growth of the young musician is highly important.

The Bellingham Friends of Music (BFOM) is offering scholarships to music students at Bellingham Memorial School (BMS) and Bellingham High School (BHS) to help defray the costs of private or small group lesson instruction.

Students may take lessons in the district (coordinated through the Bellingham music staff) or through a teacher outside of the district (coordinated by the individual student/family). Both options are eligible for a BFOM scholarship. Lesson rates typically vary between \$18 and \$25 per half-hour lesson depending on the teacher.

**Scholarship applications are due by Sept. 8, 2017, and can be completed online at <http://www.bellinghammusic.org/privatelessons/>**

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# PARENT GUIDE

Welcome to the Bellingham High School Band Program. The following parent guide will provide you with information regarding ways in which you can help support our student musicians.

## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

1. Help your child to learn the lesson and band rehearsal schedule. Post it in a convenient place.
2. Encourage your child to play for others when the opportunity arises – in the home, at school, and in the community.
3. Your interest and praise is what matters most.
4. Arrange a regular time for playing, ten minutes per day.
5. Find a quiet place for playing. Having a music stand and metronome helps.
6. Become familiar with your child's music and lesson book. Take time to listen to your child's playing. It only takes a minute.
7. Many students do better with keeping a daily playing record.
8. Provide a safe place to store musical instruments.
9. Be very careful with school-owned instruments. The costs of repairs are very high.
10. Help keep the instrument in good repair with reeds, valve oil, etc. in the case.
11. Share any information that will help me to understand and better educate your child.
12. Help chaperone band field trips.
13. Become an active member of Bellingham Friends of Music.
14. Expose your child to all kinds of music. Encourage your child to borrow musical recordings from the library, and go to symphony concerts, musicals, open-air concerts, parades, ethnic music performances, and high school or middle school concerts. Ask the band director for more listening examples.

## TIPS FOR MOTIVATING YOUR STUDENT

1. Assist your student in his/her playing at home. Don't worry if you do not have a musical background. What your child needs from you is not musical expertise, but patience, encouragement, and support.
2. Listen to him/her play!
3. Be very generous with your interest and praise. Credit each achievement with some form of recognition.
4. Encourage them to play during commercial breaks of a television show.