



Dear music students and families:

We are happy and excited to share the new structure of the Concert Band program as you plan for the next school year and the course selection process. Over the past few years, our music program has grown rapidly and we are proud of our students and this growth. Due to the increasing numbers in the BHS 9-12 grade Concert Band, the music staff will be modifying the design and curriculum of the Concert Band program starting in the fall of 2020. In order to provide the best music education for our students with our current resources, we feel these changes best suit the needs of our students while challenging them to grow as musicians and young adults. This structure was developed as the result of many conversations with the music staff and administration.

Marching Band will no longer be a requirement to be in Concert Band but instead will operate as an independent, after school, co-curricular activity. This co-curricular Marching Band will still be an important part of the Bellingham Music Program, taught by music staff and representing our school and town at many performances and events. This new co-curricular Marching Band will open to all BHS band students in grades 8-12. Students who wish to participate in the Marching Band program must be an enrolled student in the band program at BHS, as it is necessary to have a strong musical foundation and continue to develop those skills with trained music teachers. Participation in the co-curricular marching band is not a substitution for academic credit or completion of graduation requirements. Our Color Guard program, which includes students in grades 7 - 12, will continue to perform alongside and in partnership with our Marching Band in the fall.

We anticipate Marching Band rehearsals will be Monday afternoons and Thursday evenings. On Monday afternoons, we are planning to have music rehearsal from 2 to 4 p.m. (with an option of 2 to 3 p.m. for students who need to use the late bus). We will continue to hold Thursday evening rehearsals from 6 to 8 p.m, which will focus on putting music and drill together with the BHS Color Guard. Marching Band members would also be asked to commit to rehearsals in August before school begins, commonly called "Band Camp." This August rehearsal schedule would be similar to previous years, approximately 6-7 rehearsals in the two weeks before school begins. In keeping with the tradition and spirit of the BHS Music Program, the Marching Band would continue to perform at home football games in the fall, take field trips to events like UMass Band Day, potentially Fenway Park if invited, and other community events.

We anticipate the following changes to the Concert Band curriculum and lesson design during the school day:

- More time-on-learning in instrumental techniques (improving skills on individual instruments)
- More time-on-learning in musicianship skills such as music reading and music theory
- Continuation/development of our chamber music program, which was very successful this year
- Continuation/development the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Winds programs in addition to Concert Band
- More challenging music literature
- Ability to explore a variety of educational opportunities with guest conductors, and local colleges and universities

Things that will remain the same for the students in the Concert Band:

- Concert Band will continue to be an academic course during the school day (one block for all grades 9-12 students)
- Concert Band will continue to be co-taught by music teachers, Ms. Forte and Mrs. Blakely
- Evening concerts such as the Winter Concert, All Town Band Concert, MICCA, Pops Concert, and other performances will continue to be part of the academic requirements for the Concert Band course.
- **The annual Bellingham Memorial Parade in May will continue to be part of the academic requirement for Concert Band as this is a significant event and service to the Town of Bellingham, our veterans and families.**

Things that will remain the same for the students in the Concert Band (*continued*):

- Students can continue to enroll in Concert Band for Honors Credit. In fact, if students participate in the co-curricular Marching Band and complete their fall commitment, they will automatically receive honors credit. This honors credit will be extended to any 8th grade band student who participates and completes the fall marching band activity. (Honors credit Option 1 - see chart below)
- Honors credit options will still be offered for students who wish to select from a list of options such as private lessons, jazz band, Central District auditions, Student Artist Recital performance, MICCA Solo & Ensemble Festival or project designed by student and teacher. Marching Band will not be mandatory to receive honors credit. (Honors credit option 2 - see chart below)

Again, we are excited and proud of the growth of our music program and we feel that these changes will continue to develop our music program and offer the best possible music education for our students. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Marie Forte, BHS Band Director and Fine Arts Department Coordinator, mforte@bpsdk12.org

Bonnie Blakely, BHS Band Director, bblakely@bpsdk12.org

Course	Honors credit option 1	Honors credit option 2
Concert Band, grades 9-12 Honors credit level	Participate in the fall Marching Band co-curricular ensemble, with at least 85% attendance plus tiered assignments (Extended excused absences from school will be addressed on an individual basis.)	Complete three of the following activities plus tiered assignments: Central District Auditions; Student Artist Recital/Prism Concert solo performance; Jazz Band; consistent private lessons on primary band instrument; MICCA Solo/Ensemble Festival and special project(s) assigned by teacher
8th Grade Band, Honors credit level	Participate and complete the fall Marching Band co-curricular ensemble, with at least 85% attendance plus tiered assignments. (Extended excused absences from school will be addressed on an individual basis.)	Consistent private lessons on primary band instrument

New Course Descriptions in Program of Studies

CONCERT BAND 21st CLE: Communication & Collaboration		<u>Course Description:</u> Students will be exposed to and perform various musical styles and literature for concert and marching band. Concepts taught in this course include tone production, reading notation, elements of meter and rhythm and performing as part of a large instrumental ensemble. Concert Band addresses the Massachusetts Music Frameworks with emphasis on clusters 1 and 2. Students are expected to attend all concerts and performances, including one parade, as part of the grading requirements. Marching Band is NO LONGER a requirement for Concert Band. ** This course may be repeated for credit.
Course Number	05582	
Level	II	
Length of Course	Full Year	
Credit	1	
Grade Placement	9, 10, 11, 12	
Prerequisite	Grade 8 Concert Band or Permission of Instructor	
CONCERT BAND HONORS 21st CLE: Communication & Collaboration		<u>Course Description:</u> This course is for highly motivated CONCERT BAND students. In addition to the concepts addressed in Concert Band, students are responsible for a more challenging curriculum. Students will also be expected to participate in three of the following activities: Central District Auditions; Student Artist Recital performance; Jazz Band; consistent private lessons on primary band instrument; MICCA Solo/Ensemble Festival and special project assigned by teacher OR participation in the co-curricular marching band in the fall. Students are expected to attend all concerts and performances, including one parade, as part of the grading requirements. Marching Band is NO LONGER a requirement for Concert Band. **This course may be repeated for credit.
Course Number	05583	
Level	III	
Length of Course	Full Year	
Credit	1	
Grade Placement	9, 10, 11, 12	
Prerequisite	Permission of Instructor	