

Ryan Raider Band - New Members

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (updated 1/15/2023)

1. Is high school band different from middle school band?

High school band and middle school band have differences and similarities. If you have been in middle school band 6-8 grade, you are ready for high school band. The similarities are: you will perform the instrument you have begun to learn in middle school and the concert setting will be familiar. However, there are many differences or new experiences at the high school level: more music, more students, more trips, and during football season, the bands combine to form one big band that plays at football games. Band is designed to be a grade 6-12 activity. You will find that there is something new and exciting each year. By the time you graduate, you will have had a variety of experiences and opportunities to take with you.

2. Why should I take band in high school?

Music is a science. It is exact and specific. It also demands exact acoustics. Music involves mathematics. It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions, which must be done instantaneously. Music is a foreign language. Most of the terms are in Italian, German or French; and the notation is certainly not English - but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. Music is history. Music is physical education. It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms and facial muscles, while marching band strengthens the entire body. Music develops insight and demands research. Music and band are all of these things, but most of all, music is art. It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically difficult techniques and use them to create emotion.

Other Benefits: As one of the largest organizations on campus at Ryan HS, you will have the opportunity to make a lot of friends and have a large support network. Friends in band help each other with homework, advice, transportation, and variety of other things. Band students also have a very high passing rate and very high GPA. Many Top 10, Salutatorians, and even Valedictorians have been members of the Raider Band. Band members are some of the most successful students on campus. Many band students are also involved in student organizations, sports, and other fine arts activities. We try to create a climate of excellence for all band students and encourage them to take that attitude to the classroom, other activities, and the community.

3. How good is the Ryan Raider Band?

The Ryan bands receive many awards for excellence. However, success or excellence cannot always be measured in awards or competition. We program some of the most rewarding and challenging music for students to learn and perform. If you are measuring success according to awards for performance, the Raider Band program has one of the most outstanding records of success in this region of Texas. The Ryan Band is a consistent first division (superior rating) in UIL Marching Band and UIL Concert and Sight-Reading. In 2021, the Ryan Band placed in finals and received "Best in Class" in all Pre-UIL Band Competitions. The Ryan HS Wind Ensemble was recently recognized as a National Winner for the Mark of Excellence Wind Band Honors.

4. Am I required to attend summer band camp at Ryan HS?

Yes. All students are required to attend *all* of summer band camp. Attendance at this camp is important because students will learn much of the show before the 1st day of school. We will also rehearse all of the music to be performed at football games. Our first performance of the year usually takes place the first week of school and this camp allows us to be prepared. Other important things that take place during camp: uniform fitting, band photos, learning all of the band procedures, and band social events. Students that do not attend all of the camp will be assigned to the contest show as an alternate.

5. What is a contest show “alternate”?

Students who do not attend Super Saturday and summer band camp will be assigned to begin the school year “shadowing” a student that has a position in the contest show. This position is called an “alternate” because if a shadowing student participates in rehearsals regularly and shows that s/he is learning the contest show, the student will be able to alternate performances with the student s/he is shadowing. For example, student A would march the position one week while student B shadows. The next week, student B would march the position while student A shadows. Alternates may also earn positions in the contest show if another student loses his/her academic eligibility, does not attend rehearsal, or does not pass-off his/her music.

6. Is Marching Band a separate class?

No. Marching Band is the combination of all the band students from four classes: Wind Symphony, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, and Percussion class. This occurs during the months of August through early November (and occasionally Nov.-Dec. to perform shows for football playoff games). The Marching Band meets before or after school depending on the weekly schedule to prepare for upcoming performances (according to band calendar). In addition to the music these combined bands play in the bleachers during the football game, there are three on-field programs the Marching Band will perform: the spirit show, the drill team routine, and the contest show. The contest show requires a higher level of time commitment and personal practice. The spirit show requires less time to learn and less rehearsal time outside of the school day (see below).

7. What is the difference between the “contest show” and the “spirit show?”

During the 1st semester the band performs at all Ryan Raider varsity football games and band contests. Every student in band performs at all of the football games: music in the bleachers, pre-game for home games, and the halftime show. The halftime show during the regular season consists of music for the drill team and the contest show. All students perform the drill team portion of halftime. Students who are contest show alternates do not perform the contest show until they earn a position. The spirit show will be performed at pre-game at all home games and at halftime during the playoffs. All band students have an assigned position to perform in the spirit show. The contest show will be performed at 2-3 pre-UIL contests and fall UIL contests. From the start of school in August through the end of October, the band rehearses the contest show 8 hours outside of the regular school day per week in preparation for these contests. These 8 hours are the only time each week all of the band students are combined together to rehearse as the marching band. All students, regardless of contest show status, are required to be at 7:00am game-day rehearsals to rehearse everything we will perform on the field at that night’s game: drill team routine, spirit show and/or contest show.

8. How do I sign up? Is there an audition for new students to be in band?

All 9th grade woodwind and brass players sign up for **Non-Varsity Band 1 (2A period)**. All 9th grade percussionists sign up for **Percussion 1 (2B period)**. Students entering high school band must have completed band as an 8th grade student. All students must audition to be considered for Wind Ensemble or Symphonic Band. Audition materials will be distributed shortly after Spring Break. The audition details and dates will be described in that packet. If you are coming to Ryan from a school outside of Denton ISD, please contact the band director to audition. There are specific requirements to be in the different levels of band classes.

Jazz Band – 9th graders interested in jazz band sign up for **Jazz Ensemble 1 (4A period)**. Final approval for the class depends on an audition. Audition materials will be distributed shortly after Spring Break. The audition details and dates will be described in that packet. Jazz band instruments are saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar, piano, bass, and drum set. If you were in your middle school jazz band, you should be prepared for high school jazz band.

9. What is the difference between the Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Concert Band?

We expect the same work ethic and level of excellence from all of our bands. The differences between the bands are the level of skills being developed and the difficulty level of the music programmed for each class. Throughout the school year, each band will rehearse during its own class period. During football season, all three of these band classes are combined to form the marching band before or after school. After football season, each band will have its own respective rehearsal schedule outside of the school day (full band and/or sectionals) in preparation for various concerts and the UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest in April.

Wind Ensemble

- Varsity level (1st) concert band. Performs up to Grade 5 level literature.
- Required to participate in the 1st semester UIL Contest Show and Spirit Show
- Required to participate in the TMEA audition process
- Required to participate in Solo and Ensemble Contest on a Class 1 solo or ensemble
- Performs at all scheduled RHS Band concerts
- Performs at UIL 6A Varsity Band Concert and Sight-reading Contest
- “Even” numbered years, record for the TMEA 5A Honor Band competition
- Performs in any National or Regional Contest/Festival scheduled for the Wind Ensemble
- Attends all required Raider Band Program Concerts
- Attends at least one outside concert per semester (i.e. professional, collegiate, approved community concerts)
- All members required to maintain academic eligibility to remain in the Wind Ensemble

Symphonic Band

- Non-Varsity (2nd) concert band. Performs up to Grade 4 level literature.
- Required to participate in the 1st semester UIL Contest Show and Spirit Show
- Required to participate in Solo and Ensemble Contest on a solo or ensemble. First-time soloists should select a title from the Class 2 UIL Prescribed Music List.
- Performs at all scheduled RHS Band concerts
- Performs at UIL 6A Non-Varsity Band Concert and Sight-reading Contest
- Performs in any National or Regional Contest/Festival scheduled for the Symphonic Band
- All members required to maintain academic eligibility to participate in off-campus and extra-curricular performances

Concert Band

- Sub Non-Varsity (3rd) concert band. Performs up to Grade 3 level literature.
- Required to participate in the 1st semester Spirit Show. Encouraged to participate in UIL Contest Show.
- Performs at all scheduled RHS Band concerts
- Performs at the UIL 5A Non-Varsity Band Concert and Sight-reading Contest
- Required to participate in Solo and Ensemble Contest on a Class 2 level solo or ensemble.
- Performs in any National or Regional Contest/Festival scheduled for the Concert Band
- All members required to maintain academic eligibility to participate in off-campus and extra-curricular performances

10. Do I get P.E. credit for Marching Band?

Yes. The credit gained in 1st semester band class may be counted as a Physical Education credit.

11. Can band students earn letter jackets?

Yes. DISD awards letter jackets to students who meet the criteria for earning a band letter jacket. DISD provides the jacket and letter. Any additional patches are the student's responsibility. There is a DISD letter jacket form that students must submit to the band director at the end of the school year in order to receive the jacket the following 1st semester. This form shows the points system and how a jacket may be earned.

12. Can I be in Band and Athletics?

Yes. There are many students who are in both band and athletic activities. It is possible to be very successful in multiple activities at Ryan HS if students manage their time wisely and communicate effectively with their parents and sponsors. The band directors and coaches at Ryan HS have a cooperative working relationship and have worked together with students to help them be successful in the activities that interest them. The only limits are the number of courses a student may select in a given semester. Students interested in multiple activities can remain in those activities if they have courses somewhat planned out for their four years in high school. See your high school counselor for more assistance developing a four-year plan.

13. What is the Booster Club?

The Raider Band Booster Club is an organization that supports the Raider Band in a variety of ways: raising funds, providing chaperones, providing volunteers to assist the directors and students, and advocating for the band program in the community. The Booster Club is a valuable component to the band program's success and it is a great way for parents to be involved in the program. Booster Club dues and other funds brought in by the club benefit the students in the band program and help keep the cost of band participation fees low. The Booster Club is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization operated according to the procedures and guidelines of UIL and Denton ISD in addition to its own Constitution and By-Laws.

14. Does it cost money to be in band?

Yes. It costs money for the band to function. There are many things provided by DISD to all band students. However, students must purchase their own marching band shoes, band t-shirt, and musical supplies. These are ordered through the band office. Anything that a student will keep must be purchased by the student. Students who use an instrument owned by DISD are required to pay an instrument usage fee. Students who play an instrument not owned by DISD must provide their own

instrument either by ownership or rental. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch may have this fee reduced by DISD. Any other fees may be paid for by fundraisers, paid from individuals using a payment plan, or paid in one lump sum. Information is provided to all Raider Band students to show the fee structure and payment schedule of any fees. No matter what your financial circumstance is, we want you to be a part of the Ryan Band Family.

15. What does my Denton ISD Instrument Usage Fee cover and why do I have to pay it?

This instrument usage fee is collected so that DISD can provide routine maintenance and repair of school-owned instruments. This fee helps to ensure that each instrument provided to students is in good working condition. The instruments owned by DISD are the larger, most expensive instruments used by the band. The fee charged by DISD is very small compared to the cost of renting or paying for one's own instrument. This fee covers routine maintenance and repair but not damages due to student negligence.

16. How much time is involved in high school band?

Each band class will rehearse during its regularly scheduled class time. Rehearsals outside the school day vary depending upon the band that a student is involved in. August-October, students in the marching band contest show will put in 8 hours each week of additional rehearsal time outside of the school day. During the 2nd semester, students in Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band rehearse for an additional 3-4 hours of rehearsal each week beyond their regular class rehearsals. If a student chooses to participate in private lessons, the TMEA All-Region/All-State Auditions, or Solo and Ensemble Contests, then additional individual practice time is necessary in order for a student to be successful in those activities.

17. Do I need to take private lessons?

Private lessons are not required to be in band but we consider them to be an important component of a student's musical development. Roughly 80% of our students study with a private lesson teacher on a weekly basis. Private lesson scholarships funded by our booster club are available for students who meet the DISD criteria. We have highly skilled Denton ISD lesson teachers that teach on our campus before school, during band classes, and after school. If a student is interested in making the All-Region or All-State Bands or performing a solo at a Solo and Ensemble Contest, lessons are vital. The names of our lesson teachers and their contact information are posted on our website. Contact the directors for more information.

18. Who do I contact if I have questions?

Parents and students are encouraged to contact one of the band directors if they have questions:

Jarrod Beard, Director (940-369-3079 or jbeard2@dentonisd.org)

Nachel Konemann, Associate Director (940-369-3049 or nkonemann@dentonisd.org)

Frank Chapple, Percussion Director (940-369-3078 or fchapple@dentonisd.org)

Devin Guillotte, Color Guard Director (940-369-3129 or dguillotte@dentonisd.org)

Students also have section leaders to call on for assistance. New students will choose a big brother/sister to help them through their first year. The booster club will also select mentor parents from each section of the band to help new Ryan Band parents.