

BAND HANDBOOK 2025-2026

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WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear band parents and students,

Welcome to band at Heartland! I am so glad to have each student and family on board. Band is a great opportunity to deepen friendships, develop leadership skills, and learn valuable life lessons through music. Commitment is necessary to having a positive experience in band. Band is not easy, and it won't always be fun. Band is hard work, but it IS extremely rewarding!

This handbook is designed to answer any questions you may have about Heartland's band program. Please read it carefully then sign and return the signature page. I am always available to answer any questions or talk about concerns you may have. I am honored to work with the students at Heartland and am looking forward to a great year together!

*Blessings,
Miss Michelle Probst*

BAND MISSION STATEMENT

Heartland's band program exists to empower students to learn instrumental technique, music literacy, and ensemble skills so that students and graduates play their instruments with excellence and use their musicianship to glorify God and minister to others.

OBJECTIVES

Through instrumental study in band, students will:

- Learn to play their instruments with correct posture, proper technique and pleasing tone quality.
- Become proficient at reading music and performing it accurately and artistically.
- Develop and demonstrate Christ-like character.
- Use their talents to worship God and minister to others.

PERFORMANCE EVENTS

- December 15, 2025 (7:00 PM) – Band Full Concert
 - Dress Code – dressy black or black and white
- Tentative April 16, 2026 (7:00 PM) – Band Full Concert
 - Dress Code – dressy black or black and white
- July 6-11, 2026 – GWSM Band Camp (see p. 4)

COMMUNICATION

Announcements and general information will periodically be sent out in band groups on Remind. Feel free to contact the director at any point with questions or concerns, but please carefully read the group announcements first. I will do my best to help.

PARENTS' INFLUENCE

While the ultimate responsibility for achievement rests on each student, parental involvement is essential to boost student success by providing encouragement and accountability. Without the support of band parents, the success of the band organization is limited and the director's hands are tied. Here are some critical ways parents can help:

- Show an interest in the musical study of your child. Be aware and encouraging!
- Find a regular time and a quiet place for your child to practice.
- Sign the student's practice sheet every week, even if their practice time is incomplete. Your signature acknowledges that you are aware of how much they did (or did not) practice.
- Encourage carefulness with instruments – repairs are often costly.
- Double check to make sure students bring their instruments and folders to school.

STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY

To ourselves – You get out what you put in. Half-hearted effort will yield mediocre results. Please do your best and keep learning. The director is available for guidance and encouragement – if you ask!

To the school – Heartland Christian School strives to develop Christ-like leaders who are competent, creative, confident, connected, and people of courage and character. Band provides many opportunities to nurture and demonstrate these traits.

To each other – Just like a sports team, each band member's attitude and effort affects other people in the group. A team is only as strong as its weakest player. Set a good example for others to follow!

BAND LEVELS & CURRICULUM

Any student in grade 5+ may join band at Heartland. All students (except beginners) will audition to be placed in the band that best matches their playing level. Each class meets for 40-minute class periods on Mondays and Wednesdays. Beginning band has an additional session on Fridays.

Beginning Band works almost exclusively from *Standard of Excellence*, book 1. No previous experience is required.

Cadet Band is for students who have limited experience on their instrument and are still developing fundamental skills. Cadet band uses *Standard of Excellence*, book 1 and plays grade 0.5-1 band literature.

Intermediate Band plays from *Standard of Excellence*, book 2, as well as various grade 1-2 band literature. Emphasis is placed on musical literacy and technical proficiency.

Concert Band plays grade 2+ band literature and works from *Standard of Excellence*, book 3. Emphasis is placed on musical expression and ensemble skills.

Band Camp – All band students are strongly encouraged to attend Garen Wolf School of Music Fine Arts Camp, held on the God's Bible School and College campus in Cincinnati, OH, on a Monday-Saturday, typically the week after July 4. The \$200 registration cost includes food and lodging (an early bird discount is available). For more information and to register, visit www.gwsmcamp.com.

GRADING POLICY

Each student will receive one grade per quarter for band. Grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- Class attendance and participation - 25% (assessed quarterly by student and teacher rubrics)
- Practice time - 25% (checked weekly – half is amount of time and half is parent signature)
- Playing tests and assessments - 25% (test material will be announced 1-2 weeks in advance)
- Performance attendance - 25%

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Much of the success of any team is determined by all members being present, responsible, and coachable. Please let the band director know ASAP when you realize your child will miss a band class. Excessive absences will be considered on an individual basis and may result in a student being dismissed from band.

Students are allowed 3 unexcused absences from band per semester. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a strike (see p. 6). Absences from band will be excused according to the HCS student handbook. To erase unexcused absences from their record, students may request a makeup assignment.

If you forget to bring your instrument to school, it is YOUR responsibility to inform the band director. Do not send a friend to relay the message; talk directly to the band director. Written work will be given in class and further consequences will follow if a student habitually forgets their instrument.

Students are expected to participate in all scheduled performances. Exceptions must be cleared with the director at least 2 weeks prior to the event and may result in a student's grade being lowered up to 10 pts.

PERSONAL PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

You get to decide how good you will be on your instrument. Practice makes permanent, so practice well! The more you practice, the better you will be able to play your instrument. As you get better at your instrument, you will be able to play harder music. The harder the music you can play, the more fun band is! With patience and perseverance, you will make great progress.

- The minimum weekly personal practice requirements are as follows:
 - ✓ Beginning Band: 5 minutes a day, 5 days a week (Total 25 minutes per week)
 - ✓ Cadet Band: 10 minutes a day, 5 days a week (Total 50 minutes per week)
 - ✓ Intermediate Band: 10 minutes a day, 5 days a week (Total 50 minutes per week)
 - ✓ Concert Band: 15 minutes a day, 4 days a week (Total 60 minutes per week)
- You may count any time you spend legitimately practicing your instrument at home, even if you are not working on our band music. Time spent playing in class or a lesson with your teacher does NOT count.
- Practice sheets will be checked at the beginning of band class every Monday. If you practice but don't write it down or turn it in, your grade for the week will be ZERO!
- Each student will be allowed one "grace" week on their practice time per semester. This may be used for any reason. However, once that week is used, no further freebies will be given.
- If a student has a legitimate reason (e.g. sickness, weeklong vacation) why he/she cannot complete the required practice time in any given week, here are several alternatives to playing the instrument that may be counted as practice time. **A signed note from a parent explaining why the student was unable to play his/her instrument is required for credit to be given.**
 - ✓ Listen to a professional playing your instrument on YouTube and submit a listening report
 - ✓ Finger through your band music
 - ✓ Clap and count your band music
 - ✓ Practice ahead if you know you will be unable to practice a certain week.
- Band is an academic class and personal practice time is your homework. If practice time is not completed AND turned in the following Monday, the student will receive the same consequence as if they had incomplete homework in their learning center. The student will also be expected to make up the missed practice time.
- All students begin the school year on probation in band. If a student has shown no effort after 3 weeks, he/she will be dismissed from band for the remainder of the school year.

MUSIC PASS-OFF SYSTEM

Pass-offs allow students to demonstrate mastery of the music at their own pace. The player must successfully demonstrate to the director or designated student assistant his/her ability to perform it. Every note and rhythm must be perfect, although further expectations will be adjusted according to the student's level of experience. Pass off scores will be tallied and rewards given at the end of each quarter.

LOST MUSIC

Band music is expensive. Heartland is working to build a library of quality band music. Students are expected to keep all their band music in the provided folders. Students who lose or destroy band music will be charged \$10 per piece that is damaged or not returned.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a position of service. All band students are encouraged to contribute to the band team according to their abilities. Furthermore, qualified students will be appointed to specific positions, such as section leader, crew chief, or class librarian. Additional opportunities will also be presented.

BAND STRIKES

If a band student continuously neglects to fulfill the expectations for band students, he/she will receive a strike. A pink slip listing the reason will be sent home and must be signed by a parent and returned to the band director ASAP. Three strikes will result in the student being dismissed from band for the remainder of the school year. Students may re-audition again the following school year. A strike in band also counts as a strike toward detention. Additional consequences may be given for delinquent behavior as deemed appropriate.

INSTRUMENTS AND SUPPLIES

HCS is pleased to partner with Quinlan & Fabish Music Company (formerly Muncie Music Center) for band supplies and instrument rental and repair. Q&F has a user-friendly instrument rental program and provides quality instruments. Brandon Holloway, an educational representative from Q&F, travels to HCS weekly. Supplies can be ordered online (<https://qandf.com>) and delivered directly to HCS at no additional charge. If you have questions about instrument rentals or supplies that the band director cannot answer, you can call the store at (765) 284-4481.

All instruments are **NOT** created equal. Many brands have consistent reputations – good or bad – among band directors and repair technicians. Please check with your director before purchasing a “great deal.”

SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS

HCS has a limited supply of instruments available for band instruments to use. Each student who rents a school-owned instrument is completely responsible for the care of the instrument. A \$100 fee will be assessed for the year and will be used to cover routine maintenance caused by normal wear and tear. If the instrument is damaged due to abuse or negligence, the student will be responsible for the entire cost of repair or replacement. An instrument rental form must be filled out and returned with payment to the director before an instrument will be assigned.

CONTRACT OF MUTUAL CONSENT

I agree to follow the policies found in the band handbook so that I may participate in band at Heartland Christian School for the 2025-2026 school year. I commit to being in band for the full school year.

Student signature

Date

Student signature

Date

Student signature

Date

Student signature

Date

I have read and understand the policies in the band handbook and will support my child(ren) in band at Heartland Christian School for the entire 2025-2026 school year.

Parent/Guardian signature

Date