



End-of-Year Placement Audition Information

As we look forward to the next school year, here is information about our annual end-of-year placement auditions. Auditions will be held during your child's band class from April 22 to May 3. **All current 6th and 7th grade band students are required to participate for a twice-weighted major grade.** This audition serves as the individual assessment of each student's musical skills mastered from this school year. Think of this as the individual STAAR test for Band.

The concert portion of the Belton Middle School Band consists of 3 ensembles: the Beginner's Ensemble, the Symphonic Band, and the Wind Ensemble. This audition serves as the placement exam for students into one of these 3 groups. Students in the Beginner's Ensemble are from grades 6-8, while students in the advanced groups (Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble) are from grades 7 and 8 only. Placement in these advanced ensembles is based on ability and musicianship, not grade level. Much like when students move from 6th to 7th grade, Symphonic Band serves as the natural next step in the progression from Beginner's Ensemble. Wind Ensemble serves as the premier group, and students in both groups participate in pep rallies, concerts, contests, etc.

For wind players, the audition material consists of scales and a brief sightreading excerpt. Percussion students will audition with Mr. Smith on similar material. Detailed information about scales and sightreading will be provided directly to students, and each audition should last no more than 5-10 minutes. Students will play their audition only once, and will not be allowed to redo it. Auditions will be audio recorded for directors' reference, not for public distribution.

Students will earn a separate score and grade for their audition. Scores determine ensemble placement, and grades are earned based on each student's individual audition preparation, performance, and potential. For this major grade, only the following grades will be given: 100, 85, 70, and 50. Any student who earns a grade of 50 will be required to repeat Beginning Band next year if they wish to remain in the Belton Middle School Band program.

For interested saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion students, this audition also serves as placement into our Jazz Band. No additional music is required to prepare for this ensemble. **Not all students who audition for Jazz Band will earn a spot in this group.** Students must be concurrently enrolled in either Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble, and use 2 elective choices in order to participate in this elite group.

Audition results are final and will be officially posted on **Friday, May 10 at 8:00am**. These results will be sent to the school counselors for next year's scheduling. Those students choosing to not remain in Band next year will not have their results posted.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this letter to ensure a smooth audition process. As always, if there are any questions, please contact one of the directors. Thank you for your support of the Belton MS Band!