

Grand Saline ISD – 7th & 8th Grade Symphonic Band Syllabus

School Year: 2025–2026

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Course Overview

Symphonic Band is an advanced middle school ensemble for experienced student musicians. This course emphasizes high-level ensemble performance, advanced technical and musical skills, and the preparation of challenging repertoire for concerts, festivals, and contests. Students are expected to maintain a high level of personal responsibility, musicianship, and commitment to the group.

Course Goals

By the end of the year, students will:

- Perform advanced middle school concert band literature with precision and expression.
 - Master major scales up to **4 sharps and 4 flats** (minimum: 2 octaves where possible).
 - Demonstrate accurate rhythm reading, including syncopation, mixed meter, and subdivision.
 - Develop ensemble listening and balance skills.
 - Prepare for and participate in **UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Contest, Solo & Ensemble**, and **All-Region Band auditions**.
 - Demonstrate proper care, maintenance, and setup of their instrument at an advanced level.
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Instructional Units

August–September:

- Review and expand major scales and chromatic scale (full range of instrument).
- Advanced articulation styles (legato, staccato, accents, marcato).
- Tone development through long tones and lip slurs.
- Ensemble tuning and balance.
- First concert preparation.

October–December:

- Fall concert performance.
- All-Region audition music and technique drills.
- Rhythm mastery: dotted rhythms, syncopation, mixed meters.
- Increased tempo and technical demands in sight-reading.
- Begin UIL preparation.

January–March:

- UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Contest preparation.
- Emphasis on musical interpretation, phrasing, and dynamics.
- Continued technical drills: scale speed, range extension, and flexibility.

April–May:

- Solo & Ensemble preparation
 - Spring concert and/or festival trip preparation.
 - Community or special event performances.
 - Year-end music reading projects.
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Required Materials

- **Instrument** (in excellent playing condition)
 - Pencil (in band folder)
 - Band binder with music in sheet protectors
 - Required accessories (mutes, reeds, valve oil, swabs, etc.)
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Grading Policy

- **Performances & Contests:** 40%
 - **Playing Assessments & Chair Tests:** 30%
 - **Written Quizzes & Theory Assignments:** 15%
 - **Daily Participation & Preparedness:** 15%
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Practice Expectations

Students should practice **30 minutes a day, 5 days a week**. Practice should focus on ensemble music, scales, and technical studies. Weekly assignments will be given and checked.

Performance Requirements

Attendance at all scheduled events is mandatory, including but not limited to (dates TBD):

- **Fall Concert** – October
- **All-Region Band Auditions** – December
- **Winter Concert** – December
- **UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Contest** – March
- **Solo & Ensemble Contest** – April (optional but encouraged)

- **Spring Concert** – May
 - **Community/School Events** – as scheduled
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Classroom Expectations

1. Arrive on time with all required materials.
 2. Be prepared to play at the start of rehearsal.
 3. Show respect to all students, directors, and equipment.
 4. Follow rehearsal etiquette — no talking during instructions or other sections' rehearsals.
 5. No food, gum, or drinks in the band hall (water permitted).
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Communication

Updates will be shared via the BAND app. Parents are strongly encouraged to stay connected for schedule changes and announcements.