

Quail Lake
Environmental Charter School
Instrumental Music Program Handbook
2026-2027

Joshua Witrado
Director of Instrumental Music

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Welcome to the Quail Lake Environmental Charter School **Instrumental Music Program!**

Welcome all students and parents to the Quail Lake Environmental Charter School Instrumental Music Program! To our new students, welcome. To our returning students, welcome back! Another year full of music making awaits you, whether you have been playing for years or if you are only just starting. There is a place in the Quail Lake Instrumental Music Program for everyone!

There are three different band ensembles that are available for students to perform in: Beginning Band for 5th graders, Intermediate Band for 6th graders, and Wind Ensemble for 7th, and 8th graders. As 5th graders, students will have the opportunity to learn a new instrument, build a strong foundation of music fundamentals, and gain a good understanding of how to play their instrument and read music in the Beginning Band. As 6th graders, students will have the opportunity to expand their music performance ability and knowledge of music in the Intermediate Band. And as 7th and 8th graders, students will be able to fully realize their musical and leadership potential in our Wind Ensemble elective. There is nothing better than looking back as an 8th grader and seeing the immense progress you have made over the course of mastering your instrument and performing along others who share the same goal. ***For the 2023-2024 school year, our Wind Ensemble was the highest-ranking middle school band in the district at the CMEA Band Festivals!*** We hope to be just as successful this year as well!

The Quail Lake Instrumental Music Program is a tool in which students can show their true potential. Not only will they learn vast amounts of knowledge about music and performing, but they will also learn about companionship, cooperation, respect, and professionalism. Our program is about building lasting relationships and becoming better people through the practice and performance of music. Students should be able to take anything they learn in our band program and apply it to any and all aspects of their lives outside of the band room. The attitude and behavior of our program is that of a group that is here to work hard to produce great music and have fun in the process.

I am so excited to see how this year unfolds. Welcome to all again, and please do not hesitate to ask any and all questions you may have! Let's have a great year!

Sincerely,

Joshua Witrado
Quail Lake Environmental Charter School
Director of Instrumental Music
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Office email: joshua_witrado@sangerusd.net
Band website: qlbands.com
Instagram: [quaillakemusic](https://www.instagram.com/quaillakemusic)

BAND ENSEMBLE CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

Wind Ensemble: 7th-8th Grade

M/T/TH/F, 1:00 PM – 1:45 PM

The Wind Ensemble elective takes place during the regular elective period and is open for all current 7th-8th graders. In this class, 7th and 8th graders will grow to be some of the best musicians in our entire band program. Since the Wind Ensemble elective spans from 7th grade to 8th grade, new or younger students will have the opportunity to learn and perform alongside fellow musicians who are more experienced. On the other hand, older or more experienced students will have the opportunity to be leaders in the ensemble and positively help new or younger students reach high achievement. Since the Wind Ensemble is our top band at Quail Lake, this ensemble will perform in competitive festivals in the spring. Below is a list of instruments students can choose to play as their new primary instrument at the discretion of the band director:

- Flute
- Oboe
- Clarinet
- Bass Clarinet
- Alto/Tenor/Baritone Saxophone
- Trumpet
- French Horn
- Trombone
- Baritone/Euphonium
- Tuba
- Percussion

RESPONSIBILITIES, POLICIES, **AND EXPECTATIONS**

Classroom Materials

All students are responsible for the following items every day during rehearsal:

- Instrument
- Music book(s)
- All sheet music
- Pencil
- School iPad (details on [page 6](#))

In order to ensure that we have an effective and productive music rehearsal, it is absolutely essential that all students come to class on time and with all necessary materials.

Instruments will be provided by the school based on availability, but students are also able to rent or purchase their own personal instrument once they know what they will play. Rental info is attached on [page 12](#) of the handbook.

Practicing at Home

All students are responsible for learning their music and coming prepared to class every day. With that said, *all students* are expected to make time to practice as often as they can during the week. **Rehearsal is not necessarily the time for students to learn their music: it is the time to put everyone's parts together as a whole.** Shorter, more frequent practice sessions throughout the week are much better than one large practice session once a week. Students should plan out their schedules to make room for practicing amongst other homework, sports, and other outside events and activities.

Professionalism

The Quail Lake Instrumental Music Program is not simply a culmination of “electives” that students can take. It is a community of students who make a choice to be a part of something much bigger than themselves. When students are in class, they are held to a high standard of etiquette and musical achievement. When students are outside of class, they represent our band program in every aspect of their lives. Students are expected to demonstrate the same sense of etiquette and professionalism that they learn in class even more so when they are outside of class. The Wind Ensemble will especially be held to this standard as we perform at competitive festivals where we will be around other bands from other schools. Students help play a huge role in the identity and image of what our band program is all about. The way that students present themselves in public is a direct reflection of our band program as a whole, so it is extremely important for all students to practice professionalism in and out of the classroom.

Instrumental Music House Cup Award

The Instrumental Music House Cup Award is a yearly tradition designed to build a sense of community within the middle school band ensembles. Students are randomly sorted into four different houses: Phoenix, Thunderbird, Banshee, and Griffin. Throughout the school year, students' achievements will earn them points for their House and any rule breaking will lose them points for their House. At the end of the school year, the House with the most points will win the House Cup. A plaque with the winning House's name and current school year will be added to the House Cup.

Students are first sorted into their Houses the first year that they join the Wind Ensemble elective. Once students are placed in their Houses, they will remain in those same Houses all the way through 8th grade.

School iPads

All students in the Wind Ensemble elective are expected to bring their school iPads to class with them throughout the school year to use an instrument tuning app and Canvas. District and school technology policies will be enforced to ensure safe technology use during class.

GRADING POLICY

Overall grades will be given on the basis of rehearsal readiness/conduct and attendance of performances. Students will receive daily points for every rehearsal meeting *during* the school day as well as attendance points for every performance *outside* of the school day. Students who do not fully participate, or do not have their music and/or instrument *will not* receive the maximum amount of points possible. Grades can be checked on **PowerSchool** for 7th-8th Grade.

Rehearsal Readiness (per day, impacts PowerSchool grade):

1. Instrument/all music/iPad/pencil in class (5 points each) = **20/20 points**
2. No instrument in class (wind players only) = **10/20 points**
3. No music in class (percussion players only) = **10/20 points**
4. Tardy to class = 1 point off from the total number of classes per trimester

****Absences do not impact grades in any way but will be documented in PowerSchool****

Rehearsal Conduct (per week, impacts Citizenship grade):

1. **3 Strike Policy** = Minor Form issued after 3 class disruptions per week.
= Major Form issued after 3 Minor Forms issued
2. Parent contact will be made only before the first Minor Form as a warning. *Please refer to the school's parent handbook for details on PBIS forms that will be in place.*
3. House points will be either awarded or taken away based on a student's rehearsal etiquette on any given day as well. Point values are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Performances:

1. Attendance/participation = **100/100 points**

Since our band program consists of performance-based classes, *attendance is required for ALL performances throughout the year.* Performances are the means by which all of the skills learned in class are evaluated. Performances provide an experience that *cannot* be reproduced anywhere else. Like sports, performing in a musical ensemble is a team effort, and a musical performance is like a sports game. Missing players weakens the performance.

Performance Absence Policy

- Unexcused absences will result in **0/100 points** for that specific performance.
- Written excuses, as per the "performance absence form" (**see page 11**), may be considered when turned in to the director **at least two weeks prior** to the performance.
- If a performance is missed, **a makeup assignment will be due within one week after the student has received the makeup assignment.**
 - Students can earn up to **100/100 points** if notice of absence is provided *at least* two weeks in advance and their assignment is turned in complete and on time.
 - Students can earn up to **50/100 points** if notice of absence is provided *less than* two weeks in advance and their assignment is turned in complete and on time.
 - Students can earn up to **50/100 or 25/50 points**, respectively, if their assignment is turned in past the due date.
 - Students will earn **0/100 points** if notice of absence is not provided **OR** if their assignment is not turned in.

Citizenship Grade Rubric:

Citizenship grades are based on character. The percentage grades that students receive in PowerSchool from everyday class rehearsals and performances are the culmination of the execution of musical material learned in class throughout each trimester. The citizenship grade goes much more beyond that. It dives into traits like professionalism, a drive for excellence, appropriate rehearsal etiquette, collaboration, and leadership. These elements show how students are as people within the school community. The percentage grade reflects the mastery of the material learned in class, but the citizenship grade reflects the values learned and the character built from being in a high achieving performance ensemble. My hope is that this rubric elaborates clearly what is expected from all students.

Criteria	Outstanding (O)	Satisfactory (S)	Needs Improvement (N)
Preparedness	Arrives on time every day with instrument, music, iPad, pencil, and all required materials. Ready to play immediately.	Usually arrives on time with required materials. Occasional reminders needed.	Frequently missing materials, late, or unprepared.
Setup & Cleanup Responsibility	Sets up and puts away materials quickly and independently. Helps others or picks up items left behind without being asked.	Sets up and puts away own materials appropriately without reminders.	Requires repeated reminders to set up or clean up. Leaves materials or area messy.
Focus During Rehearsal	Consistently attentive and engaged. Sets an example for others through excellent listening and rehearsal habits.	Follows directions and stays focused during rehearsal with minimal reminders.	Frequently off-task, talking, distracted, or distracting others.
Respect & Responsibility	Demonstrates leadership through positive actions, encouragement, helping classmates, and contributing to a strong rehearsal environment.	Treats others respectfully and meets expectations for behavior.	Shows behaviors that negatively affect classmates or the rehearsal environment.
Initiative & Leadership	Regularly goes beyond expectations without being asked. Helps maintain a positive band culture.	Meets expectations consistently but generally does not take on leadership responsibilities.	Does not consistently meet expectations and requires regular intervention.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

Concert & Festival Attire

Wind Ensemble (7th-8th Grade)

- Concert attire will be **all black** for performances.
- **Gentlemen** are expected to wear a black, long-sleeved, collared, buttoned-down dress shirt with black slacks. Shoes are expected to be black dress shoes with long black socks. ***Any other attire option will not be acceptable.***
- **Ladies** are expected to wear a black dress that extends below the knees *when sitting down* **OR** formal black dress pants and a formal black top. Shoes are expected to be black flats that are close-toed. ***Any other attire option will not be acceptable.***
- ***This attire must be worn at all school concerts and at competitive festivals. Part of our overall score at festivals is based on our visual presentation so it is absolutely essential for our performance attire to be unified across the entire ensemble.***

Parade Attire

Wind Ensemble

- All Wind Ensemble members are expected to wear their marching band shirt and blue jeans that do not have tears or holes in them. Students are expected to wear tennis shoes or other supportive shoes since they will be marching. In colder weather, students may wear a black, white, or gray long-sleeved shirt *underneath* their sprit shirt. ***Any other attire option will not be acceptable.***

QUAIL LAKE

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

2026 – 2027 MASTER SCHEDULE

2026 FALL

Aug 19	First Day of School!!
Sept 7	HOLIDAY - Labor Day, No School!
Oct 30	Staff Development Day – No School!!
Nov 7	PERFORMANCE WIND ENSEMBLE – Veteran’s Day Parade, 9:30 AM @ WAMS
Nov 11	HOLIDAY – Veteran’s Day, No School!
Nov 23-27	Thanksgiving Break!!
Dec 5	PERFORMANCE WIND ENSEMBLE – Toyland Parade, 9:30 AM @ WAMS
Dec 17	PERFORMANCE <u>ALL BANDS</u> – Quail Lake Winter Program, 5:30 PM @ QL
Dec 21-Jan 8	Winter Break!!

2027 SPRING

Jan 11	First Day Back to School!!
Jan 18	HOLIDAY – Martin Luther King Jr. Day, No School!
Feb 15	HOLIDAY – Lincoln’s Holiday, No School!
Feb 22	HOLIDAY – Washington’s Holiday, No School!
Mar TBD	FESTIVAL WIND ENSEMBLE – TIME TBD @ LOCATION TBD
Mar TBD	FESTIVAL WIND ENSEMBLE – TIME TBD @ LOCATION TBD
Mar 22-27	Spring Break!!
Mar 29	HOLIDAY – Last Day of Spring Break, No School!
Apr TBD	FESTIVAL WIND ENSEMBLE – TIME TBD @ LOCATION TBD
May 10	PERFORMANCE <u>ALL BANDS</u> – Quail Lake Spring Program, 5:30 PM @ QL
May 19	PERFORMANCE <u>ALL BANDS</u> – Sanger HS Area Concert, 5:00 PM @ SHS
May 31	HOLIDAY – Memorial Day, No School!
June 11	Last Day of School! HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!

***Please keep in mind that some of the information in the calendar
may be subject to change throughout the school year***

PERFORMANCE ABSENCE FORM

This form must be completed and turned in at least two weeks in advance of any anticipated absence from a performance by a student.

Student Full Name Printed

Today's Date

Date of Anticipated Absence

Reason for absence:

Student Full Name Printed

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Full Name Printed

Parent/Guardian Signature

GOTTSCHALK MUSIC CENTER RENTAL PROGRAM



Includes theft and maintenance protection.
(ask associate for coverage details)



All rentals earn credit
that can be used towards
an instrument purchase

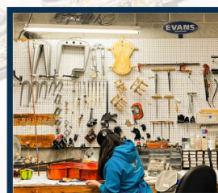
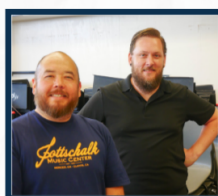


With **2 locations in the Central Valley**, we are
here to help as your local
musical experts!

FLAT MONTHLY RATES

FLUTE	\$29.00
CLARINET	\$29.50
ALTO SAX	\$57.00
TENOR SAX	\$71.00
BASS CLARINET	\$124.00
TRUMPET	\$34.00
TROMBONE	\$35.00
BARITONE/ EUPH	\$86.00
SINGLE HORN	\$82.00
DOUBLE HORN	\$149.00
PERC. KIT	\$28.00
VIOLIN	\$27.00
VIOLA	\$28.00
CELLO	\$49.50
DOUBLE BASS	\$113.00

*All rental rates include tax and reflect a \$3.00 discount for auto-pay contracts; only ONE month down required; all instruments are subject to availability



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QUAIL LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER SCHOOL
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM
HANDBOOK CONTRACT

*****Please return this page to Mr. Witrado no later than *August 28, 2026******

Student

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the expectations, guidelines, and requirements of the Quail Lake Environmental Charter School Instrumental Music Program. I have also read the master schedule and I am aware of my commitment to all events and performances for the entire school year.

Student Full Name Printed

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the expectations, guidelines, and requirements of the Quail Lake Environmental Charter School Instrumental Music Program. I have also read the master schedule and I am aware of my child's commitment to all events and performances for the entire school year.

Parent/Guardian Full Name Printed

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date