



Folly Quarter Middle School Bands
Andrew B. Spang, Director

All About Jazz Band

Jazz Band is an extra-curricular activity that is available to students by audition. Jazz Band meets after school for rehearsals once a week and performs concerts in the fall and spring, as well as attending various festivals. The music is usually more difficult than that played in concert band in school, with many individual parts. The music is also of a more “pop” or commercial sound. The typical Jazz Band is made up of:

- 4 Trumpets
- 4 Trombones
- 2 Alto Saxes
- 2 Tenor Saxes
- 1 Bari Sax
- Piano/Keyboard
- Bass Guitar
- Electric Guitar (must read chords!)
- Drums/Percussion

While it is not out of the question for any other instrument to participate in Jazz Band, it would be highly unusual and often require a lot of hand-preparation and transposing of music.

The primary purpose of the Jazz Band experience is exposure to and fostering a love of Jazz music. Students will learn to *improvise* (play music made up on the spot), play in commercial styles like swing, big band, dixie, and rock, and become familiar with jazz notation. It is important to realize that with the limited rehearsal time, the primary purpose of this ensemble is not to teach individuals how to play their instruments, but how to play in this particular style. Players must already be at an upper level in individual practice and preparedness.

Because Jazz Band has a limited number of players chosen by audition, and because there is so little doubling of parts, it is important to realize and honor the commitment made to the ensemble. If you audition for Jazz Band, it is understood that you will make your best effort to be at *every* single rehearsal and every performance.

When does Jazz Band rehearse?

Gold Jazz Band rehearses after school on **Tuesdays**, from 2:30-**4:00**. If there is enough interest, then we will have a Blue Jazz Band that rehearses after school on **Wednesdays**, from 2:30-**3:30**.

How do I get to be in Jazz Band?

Pick up an audition packet in the band room. This will tell you ❶ when auditions will take place, ❷ what you need to play for the audition, and ❸ a little about the Jazz Band program.

Where do I get an Audition Packet?

Audition Packets may be picked up in the Band Room in the Great Gray Thing That Holds All Knowledge.

I've never played in a Jazz Band. Should I still audition?

Definitely! This is where you learn!

How do I prepare the music for the audition?

Mostly, you will need to practice it on your own or with a private teacher. Listen to the study recordings, if available, and come to the optional Help Session.. Remember though, this audition is to see *who has the potential* to be a good jazz band member, not to look for the perfection of performance expected at a G/T Band or All-State audition.

Do I have to be in the Band Program to be in Jazz Band?

Basically, **yes**. There are a few exceptions: when a student can play bass or electric guitar but no other instrument, or piano, they may be allowed to audition. Percussion, saxes and brass: yes, you must be a member of the regular Band Program.

Can I play a different instrument in Jazz Band than in Band?

If you can perform on both instruments at a high enough level, then yes. Many students do exactly that.