

Elgin Eagles Music Handbook

2026-2027



Mr. Heithoff- Music

-CALENDAR OF EVENTS-

(See school calendar for detailed schedule, all dates subject to change)

MUSIC CALENDAR- SEMESTER 1

August:	13 th	School starts
	20 th	VB-SSB
	24 th	All-State Registration Opens (9-12)
September:	4 th	FB-SSB
	8 th	All-State Registration Closes (9-12)
	10 th	VB-SSB
	11 th	FB-SSB
	13 th	Car Show-SSB
	16 th	Portal opens for All-State Band Auditions (9-12)
	19 th	Lions Club Parade (7-12 Band)
	22 nd	VB-SSB
	24 th	VB-SSB
	24 th	Portal opens for All-State Choir Auditions (9-12)
October:	25 th	FB-SSB
	26 th	Portal closes for All-State Auditions (9-12)
	1 st	NSAA National Anthem Audition Deadline
	2 nd	FB-SSB
	3 rd	Harvest of Harmony Parade (7-12 Band)
	16 th	FB-SSB
	19 th	All-State Ensemble Selections Announced
	19 th /20 th	NVC VB Tournament- SSB- TBA
	26 th /27 th	VB Subdistricts-SSB-TBA
	29 th	EV JH Choral Clinic (7-8 Choir)
November:	30 th	FB Playoffs-SSB-TBA
	31 st	VB Districts-SSB-TBA
	6 th	FB Playoff-SSB-TBA
	9 th	NVC Choir- Elgin (9-12 Choir)
	11 th	Veteran's Day Program (7-12 Band and Choir)
December:	13 th	FB Playoffs-SSB-TBA
	18 th -20 th	All-State- Lincoln
	10 th	PK-12 Winter Concert- 7:00pm
	17 th	BB- SSB-PB
	21 st	BB-SSB-PB
	23 rd -27 th	Moratorium

MUSIC CALENDAR-SEMESTER 2

January:	5 th	BB-SSB-PB
	11 th	Boone Central Choral Clinic (9-12 Choir)
	22 nd	Deadline for DMC Solo/Small Group Music Selection
	26 th	BB-SSB-PB
	30 th	NVC BB Tournament-SSB-PB-TBA
February:	1 st /2 nd	NVC BB Tournament-SSB-PB-TBA
	4 th	NVC BB Tournament-SSB-PB-TBA
	6 th	Stanton JH Honor Festival (7-8 Band)
	15 th /16 th	GBB Subdistricts-SSB-PB-TBA
	18 th	GBB Subdistricts-SSB-PB-TBA
	18 th	Solo/Small Groups must have met with Mr. Heithoff once
	19 th	BB-SSB-PB
	22 nd /23 rd	BBB Subdistricts-SSB-PB-TBA
	25 th	BB Subdistricts-SSB-PB-TBA
March:	26 th /27 th	BBGB District Finals-SSB-PB-TBA
	19 th	Solo/Small Groups must have met with Mr. Heithoff twice
	19 th	DMC Entries Due
	20 th	Class D All-State Band
	22 nd	NVC Band Clinic- Rock County (9-12 Band)
April:	23 rd	District Music Contest- Summerland
	26 th	PK-12 Spring Concert- 7:00pm
May:	8 th	Graduation (7-12 Choir)
	31 st	Memorial Day (7-12 Band)

-JH/HS BAND/CHOIR CURRICULUM IN BRIEF-

Concert Band

The Concert Band is the primary performing organization in the instrumental music department during the winter and spring. Membership is open to previous Cadet Band members, or other students as approved of by Mr. Heithoff. Band class is on Monday's, Wednesday's, and Friday's.

Marching Band

Membership in the marching band requires strenuous physical exercise and the ability to play the difficult literature encountered in the activity. All students enrolled in the band program 1st semester are required to march. The marching band performs in a variety of parades, including the Lions Club Parade in Norfolk, Harvest of Harmony Parade in Grand Island, and the Wayne State Band Day Parade in Wayne.

Choir

The Concert Choir is the primary performing ensemble of the vocal side of the music department. Membership is open to any student grades 7-12. Choir class is on Tuesday's and Thursday's.

Private Lessons

As one might expect, private lessons on a musical instrument or voice are the best way to improve performance skills. The one-on-one approach allows the student to benefit from individual attention as opposed to a teacher monitoring a full class. A recent survey of students in the All-State Band revealed that approximately 80 % of the students in the band studied privately. Mr. Heithoff is more than happy to assist any student wishing to take private lessons. Students taking a semester of private lessons with Mr. Heithoff will also earn letter points.

Nebraska All-State Band/Choir (9-12) and Class D All-State Band (9-12).

Freshman through Senior members of the music program are eligible to audition for the Nebraska All-State Band/Choir and Class D All-State Band. Auditions are held at specific times throughout the year. The Class D All-State Band clinic is held in Kearney and the All-State Clinic in Lincoln. Auditioning for and/or being accepted for the either All-State Band or Choir also earns letter points.

-GRADES-

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Given our class schedule, and the nature of band and choir classes, every absence affects the entire class. For this reason, each band and choir member should make every effort to attend all rehearsals. If a student is absent, the following process will apply:

- Each student can acquire up to two absences a quarter with no grade deduction.
- After the two non-dock absences per quarter all absences will earn a grade of 0 points.

***SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES AND FUNERALS DO NOT COUNT TOWARD THESE ABSENCES. ***

*Students applying for credit appeal must attend **ALL** required performances for that semester and have a passing grade to automatically earn credit. Students appealing for credit that have missed performances must have a passing grade of a C or above to qualify.

All home performances are REQUIRED. These include our two home concerts (winter and spring), Veteran's Day, Graduation (choir), Memorial Day (band), and any Conference music events hosted by EPS. District Music Contest, while an away performance, is also required

- Excused absences from these events include illness of the performer and death in the family. Excused absences will automatically incur a grade of 70% for the missed performance. Parents should make every effort to contact Mr. Heithoff prior to the performance.
- Unexcused absences from a home performance include all other reasons besides illness of the performer or death in the family. Unexcused absences will incur an automatic grade of 0% for the performance. Make-Up assignments will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Students must request the make-up assignment, and the assignment can earn a maximum of 70% for the missed performance. Make-Up assignments will include performing the music for the performance for Mr. Heithoff. Mr. Heithoff reserves the right to refuse a make-up assignment for unexcused absences.
- All other away performances are still expected but are considered extra-curricular. As such, missing a non-required away performance will not negatively affect the student's grade. Students that miss an away performance need to make every effort to let the director know ahead of time of their absence. **Students that miss without informing the director will be asked to refund the school for incurred expenses.**
- All performance absences will result in no letter points being awarded for that performance.

*Individual needs will be addressed as they occur. This system is subject to modification by the director.

For ALL performance absences, the following procedure must be followed by the student and parent:

- Director must be notified in advance if possible, via email or phone call from the parent.
- For school activities, a sign-out sheet must be signed.
- Although cleared by the school office, absences from a music activity that same day must be cleared with the director as well – please call the music room or email Mr. Heithoff.
- Follow-up is the sole responsibility of the student!

-CONFLICTS WITH MUSIC-

Conflicts between band/choir and other activities or events are the responsibility of the student. Rehearsal and performance schedules are given out in advance so that arrangements can be made. When outside activities create hardships concerning music, unless it is a rare and unusual situation that may only happen once, the student will need to consult with the director about alternatives that may be possible. Students should have a **calendar** and be aware of all music dates well ahead of schedule. It is the policy of the band/choir to assist students when conflicts occur within the scope of the music policy. All conflicts regarding performances must be worked out in favor of the student's responsibility to their ensemble. **WORK IS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR MISSING ANY MUSIC PERFORMANCE. REQUEST TIME OFF AS SOON AS YOU KNOW THE CALENDAR!!!**

-OPTIONAL EVENTS-

Throughout the year, there are several optional events that music students can attend. Students can earn letter points and grade points by participating in these events, which then qualifies them for end of year awards.

Any student that signs up for an event is choosing to attend that event regardless of any other activities that happen on the same day- in particular student managing for playoff sports events. Any student that signs up to attend an event and does not attend will be required reimburse the school for any fees incurred.

After March 19th, any student that signs up for a solo/duet/small group at District Music and scratches will need to reimburse the school for their entry fees.

-GRADING POLICY-

Grades are assigned for the band/choir class and required performances, which are co-curricular.

GRADING PERCENTAGES

Daily Attendance and Behavior- 5 points daily	30%
Participation- 5 points daily	20%
Home Concert Performance- 100 points per ○ 25 attendance, 25 proper attire, 25 performance ability, 25 behavior	30%
Away Concert Performance- 100 points per ○ 25 attendance, 25 proper attire, 25 performance ability, 25 behavior	10%
MakeMusic/Theory Assignments/Performance Tests- vary in point value	10%

-DUTIES OF THE ENSEMBLE MEMBER-

- Be on time to all rehearsals and performances. **EARLY IS ON TIME – ON TIME IS LATE.**
- Upon entering the rehearsal setting, set up as quickly as possible.
- Come to rehearsal with your music learned. The better you know your music, the better rehearsal will be.
- When the director asks for your attention, all talking should cease.
- Come to rehearsal with a **GOOD ATTITUDE.**
- There is no excess playing/singing (i.e., horsing around on the instrument); only good solid material.
- Make a real effort to improve daily and establish a good practice routine.
- At the end of rehearsal, put all materials in their proper place.
- **MAINTAIN A STRONG ACADEMIC STANDING IN ALL COURSE WORK!**
- Be responsible for and assume responsibility for your own actions. Admit when you are wrong.
- Have a proper respect for yourself and those in authority.
- Read and play/sing music with insight – have musical expectations.

-DISTRICT MUSIC CONTEST-

Music in the state of Nebraska is unique as an NSAA event. It is the largest activity that is hosted by the NSAA yet does not have a State Contest. Therefore, District Music Contest is the equivalent to any form of State contest. Students compete for ratings, with lower scores being desirable.

- DMC solos can only be performed by students in the 9th grade or above. If EPS has fewer than 24 high school members in either band or choir, junior high will be allowed to participate in small group performances that involve all members of the band/choir.
- **ALL solos and small groups MUST be selected by January 22th. ALL solos and small groups MUST meet with Mr. Heithoff at least once prior to February 18th, and twice prior to March 19th, or they will not be entered at District Music Contest!**

- When the number of high school students in Band/Choir is 24 or more, junior high will not attend DMC in large group events (but can still participate in small groups). When that number is less, junior high will attend large/small group events.
- When high school participation drops below 50% of the group and/or less than 10 high school members, that ensemble may not compete at District Music as a large group.
- Mr. Heithoff may elect to not take the junior high or high school members that cannot adequately perform the music for district contest. Performance testing can be done to determine DMC eligibility. Members being taken to DMC must also have a 90% or higher cumulative average in the class. All members will perform on the home concerts regardless.

-PERFORMANCE DRESS-

For most performances, band members will wear their band uniforms and choir members will wear choir robes. However, if either group forgoes official concert dress, students are required to dress appropriately.

For events not requiring uniforms and robes, the following apply; Dress shirt and tie are preferred for young men in the performance ensembles. Women can wear a nice blouse. A polo shirt will also work well for either. Any shirt or dress worn should cover the performer completely from collar bone to waist. Short sleeves are fine. Western style formal dress is also acceptable (bolo tie, western style suit, etc.).

Performing members should also wear black/khaki pants or skirt/dress. Nice black jeans are allowed. Skirts/dresses must meet dress code expectations. Black leggings under dresses/skirts are acceptable, especially if the dress/skirt is shorter.

DO NOT WEAR BLUE JEANS OR JEANS/PANTS WITH HOLES.

Shoes shall consist of black dress shoes for men, and nice black heels or black flats for women. Black marching shoes will also work for either ensemble. Nice black cowboy boots are also acceptable, except for during marching season. Heels should not be stiletto type and should be no taller than 1.5 inches. Tall thin heels are a safety issue, especially when moving on risers.

-LETTER POINTS AND AWARDS-

Students can earn letter points through their participation in band and choir. While junior high students cannot letter, their points will be used for other awards given. Students can earn points in the following categories:

Enrollment in band/choir	1 pt. per semester
Home Concert Performance	1 pt. per performance
Marching Band Parades	1 pt. per parade
NVC Performance	1 pt.
EV/Stanton JH Clinic Performance	1 pt.
Boone Central Choral Clinic Performance	1 pt.
Large Group Division 1+ Rating at Districts	5 pts.
Large Group Division 1 Rating at Districts	3 pts.
Large Group Division 2 Rating at Districts	2 pts.
Contest Solo	4 pts.
Division 1 Rating on Solo	3 pts.
Division 2 Rating on Solo	2 pts.
Concert Solo NOT Performed at DMC	1 pts.
Contest Duet/Small Group	4 pts.
Small Group Division 1 Rating	3 pts.

Division 2 Rating on Solo/Small Group	2 pt.
Concert Duet/Small Group NOT Performed at DMC	1 pts.
Extra Performances (pep band, Star Spangled Banner, etc.)	0.5 pt. per game/performance
All State Audition	3 pts.
All State Selection	2 pts.
Class D All State Audition (Band)	2 pts.
Class D All State Selection (Band)	1 pt.
Honor Band/Choir Audition (UNK, WSC, FFA, etc.)	1 pt.
Honor Choir Selection	1 pt.
Private Lessons	3 pts. per semester
Graduation Performance (Choir)	1 pt.
Memorial Day Performance (Band-previous year)	1 pt.
College Scholarship Audition	1 pt.

To Letter, High school students must earn a minimum of 15 points and be a member of the ensemble for the entire year. Awards such as the John Philip Sousa Band Award and National School Choral Award will be based on Letter Points, removing as much director bias as possible from the process. In addition, each rehearsal attended will be added to the student's total letter points when determining awards above and beyond lettering (Sousa, National School Choral, etc.). This is to reward those that consistently attend rehearsals. Students performing solos/small groups for Districts and Concerts will get preference when selecting for awards. Letter points will also be used to help determine Junior High awards as well. Students must be in the ensemble (band/choir/both) for the entire year to be eligible for any awards.

-ELIGIBILITY-

Students involved in music are expected do their best in everything they do, especially academics. Students failing a class for two consecutive weeks will be ineligible from participating in any out-of-school music activities, starting on the third week they are failing. Eligibility runs from 10:00am Monday to 10:00am the following Monday.

-PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO THE MUSIC PROGRAM-

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to see that the policies outlined in the handbook are followed. Any questions are to be directed to the music director via email or phone call to the school. **Each parent IS responsible for the attendance of his/her child at all required music functions.** It is the responsibility of each parent to see that their child practices his/her instrument (including voice) daily. My hands are tied without the help of parents.

-RULES AND PROCEDURES-

- Shoes and socks should be worn for all rehearsals. **Sneakers are REQUIRED for Marching Band Rehearsals! Improper footwear will result in a lowered Daily Participation grade!- 2 pt.**
- Chewing gum is not permitted during a rehearsal or in the music room.- 1 pt.
- Attend the entire rehearsal. If you aren't here, we aren't making music (leaving early for school events excluded)- 1 pts.
- Electronic devices will only be allowed at certain times in the music room. Phones and Smart Watches are to be placed in the door pouches upon entry.- 2 pt.
- A band member must respect his/her uniform and always wear and hang it up properly- 25 pts (part of performance grade).
- Food and drink are not permitted in the music room, except water (with a lid)- 3 pts.
- No hats or sunglasses inside the building (includes other schools!)- 1 pt.
- Be in your seat, warmed up, and ready to begin on time.- 1 pt.
- Respect authority and others, including their personal property.- 1-5 points.

- A band or choir member will wear no exposed jewelry while in uniform; civilian clothes must be tasteful. Only watches, your own class ring, and small stud style earrings will be permitted while in uniform/robes.
- Drinking and drugs are STRICTLY PROHIBITED. *All school district policies regarding such are always in force.*
- All school rules will be enforced.
- Students shall not knowingly damage property or equipment. Students will be held responsible for repairs/replacements if their negligence damages an instrument.

MUSIC CONTRACT

By signing this form, you agree to all the rules and regulations in this handbook and agree to follow them. Failure to follow the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook will result in a lowering of grade and/or loss of letter points, as well as other disciplinary action deemed necessary by Mr. Heithoff or school administration.

Date _____

Signature of Student _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

The music handbook can be found on the school website under Academics > Music > Band and Choir Handbook

INSTRUMENT REPLACEMENT AND REPAIR CONTRACT

Elgin Public Schools routinely provides instruments for students to use within the band program. Any repairs required due to malicious damage, or damage through negligence, are the sole responsibility of the family using the instrument. If repairs are not able to be performed due to the extent of the damage, all replacement costs will be the responsibility of the family using the instrument, including shipping charges for the new instrument. Any family not agreeing to these terms must provide their own instrument and will be responsible for all repair and maintenance costs of their personal instrument. All instrument accessories including but not limited to cases, mouthpieces, ligatures, neck straps, lyres, etc. are also included in this policy.

Guardian Signature

Guardian Name (Print)

Phone Number
