

Prout School Music | Concert Band

Summer Practice Plan (2026) - tentatively due September 4, 2026

Mr. Ryan Cox, Director of Music



Welcome to Concert Band!

Just like your sport of choice, it's important to keep your musical skills up in the off-season to avoid the "summer chops" phenomenon that happens every fall. That's the goal behind introducing this summer ~~assignment~~ practice plan. In the same way your coaches expect you to stay active when you're out of season, I'm expecting something very similar.

For our incoming musicians, welcome to Concert Band at Prout! You're part of a tight-knit musical family now, and we're all excited for you to join us. This is my chance to make sure you're familiar with the expectations of a high school music program. Since you're all coming from a variety of schools with vastly different definitions of what "band" means, I want to make sure we're all on the same terms when August rolls around.

For our returning musicians, welcome back! Let's take the lessons we've learned from last year and keep the momentum going. What I'm hoping you'll notice when we reconvene in August is that rehearsals are way smoother when we're all confident players. We can play more interesting music, too! My goal with this plan is to keep your chops in shape, so we can play at a level truly fitting of a quality high school band.

I tell our captains every year when we meet for the first time – there is no reason we can't be one of the best bands in South County, if not the state. That starts with buying in, trusting the process, and pushing yourselves and each other to be better every day. I don't expect you all to play like professionals, but if you set out to improve a little bit each time you play, you'll be amazed at the progress looking back. So, let's get to work! I'll be practicing this summer as well – we're in this together.

Reach out any time over the summer if you have questions. All the details you need follow.

See you soon!

Mr. Ryan Cox, M.M.

Director of Music and Mathematics Faculty

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Follow us on Instagram! @proutschoolmusic

NOTE: Those who audition for RIMEA All-State are exempt from this assignment. See below.

Your offseason practice plan

Everyone has three different parts to their practice plan – scales, technical work, and a couple etudes. (Percussion, you have a similar idea, but we just use different language.) Find the details for your instrument/instrument family below, including links to all the resources you need.

New Members

Complete [this Google Form](#) so I can get some more information about your background!

Woodwinds | *flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, bass clarinet, all saxophones*

Scales Link to scale sheets (Refer to Symphonic Band options) Alternate source (Refer to “full range” options)	Concert Bb, Eb, F, and C major scales - Minimum of one octave, two (or more) where possible. - Aim for a tempo of quarter = 120, using the quarter/eighth pattern. However, you should pick a tempo that allows you to play the scales as cleanly and consistently as possible. Ex:  Transpositions: <table><tr><td><u>Flute, oboe, bassoon</u></td><td><u>All clarinets, Tenor Sax</u></td><td><u>Alto and bari sax</u></td></tr><tr><td>Bb, Eb, F, C</td><td>C, F, G, D</td><td>G, C, D, A</td></tr></table>	<u>Flute, oboe, bassoon</u>	<u>All clarinets, Tenor Sax</u>	<u>Alto and bari sax</u>	Bb, Eb, F, C	C, F, G, D	G, C, D, A
<u>Flute, oboe, bassoon</u>	<u>All clarinets, Tenor Sax</u>	<u>Alto and bari sax</u>					
Bb, Eb, F, C	C, F, G, D	G, C, D, A					
Technique	Scale patterns and articulation work - Using the same keys as above, play scales in the patterns below, observing the articulation. - You should also vary the articulation pattern to keep it interesting! <u>Options:</u> Slur 2-Tongue 2 (S2T2), Tongue 2-Slur 2 (T2S2), S3T1, T1S2T1, etc. - Same tempo goal as above (quarter = 120) <i>Ascending Thirds</i>  5  9 <i>Broken Thirds</i> 						
Etudes	Refer to this Google Drive folder and find the assigned music for your instrument. I’m hoping to compile recordings, if I can find or make them.						

Percussion | *battery, timpani, mallets*

All parts of the assignment can be found in [this Google Drive folder](#).

Students should choose the options that best align with their role in the band. Those who play (or are interested in playing) in multiple percussion roles are encouraged to work through all applicable options.

Rudiments Link to scale sheets (Refer to Symphonic Band options) Alternate source (Refer to “full range” options)	<u>Battery percussion AND timpani</u> In the “Snare rudiments” file, learn all six of the “Intermediate proficiency” rudiments. - Your goal is to play the traditional notation at quarter ≥ 100. - Start with the half-time notation as needed! Start slow, and gradually increase the tempo. Additionally, perform a roll for 10 seconds, demonstrating dynamics moving $p < ff < p$ - I found a great resource here for snare! - Snare: closed (buzz) roll; timpani: single-stroke <u>Mallets</u> Concert Bb, Eb, F, and C major scales in two octaves - Aim for a tempo of quarter = 100, using the standard quarter/eighth pattern. However, you should pick a tempo that allows you to play the scales as cleanly and consistently as possible. Ex:  - Also learn these scales using the Green Studies pattern
Rhythm	<u>Battery percussion AND timpani</u> In the “Duple check patterns” file, learn the “check” pattern and #2-7. - Notice that these are all built around the check pattern, just by removing one or two of the sixteenths. - Maintain the check pattern internally. - Your goal is to play these at quarter ≥ 100. However, start slow and gradually increase the tempo as needed. <u>Mallets</u> Nothing here, but you will be asked to do a little extra in the next category before.
Other studies	<u>ALL percussion areas</u> Prepare the additional etude(s) found in the Google Drive.

How we're assessing it

Tentatively due September 4, 2026

Within the first week of school, you will be asked to play a selection of your scales and technical studies (or your rudiments and rhythm studies, for percussion), as well as your assigned etudes. I'm not sure if I'll randomly draw some of each, or if I'll pick specific ones. **You should be prepared to play everything assigned** – they're all helpful for you to develop as musicians!

These selections can either be recorded at home and submitted on Google Classroom, or can be played in person for me when we're both free. Each area of your practice plan will count as its own playing test grade, which is counted out of five points. These are graded mostly on *effort, not perfection*. I'm using this as a way to keep you playing, and loosely figure out where you belong on parts. This is NOT an audition, and there MAY be some things out of reach for some of you. That's okay! **This is an assessment of what you CAN do, not what you can't.**

For full credit: The student plays the assignment on time, live or recorded, and (if recorded) the director is able to access the file to provide feedback. It is clear that the student has worked hard to present their best possible work, playing in tune, with appropriate tone, and in time, with appropriate rhythms and articulation.

Students who audition for the RIMEA All-State Festival are exempt from this assignment, since they will be preparing at a level beyond what I am expecting here. Since the audition takes place in Q2, they must complete a mock audition with me before the end of Q1.

Practice tips

1. Slow and clean is better than fast and sloppy.
2. Print your music, or use an iPad, and mark up your music. Circle tricky spots, write in notes, fingerings, articulation...whatever you have to do to succeed. The pros do it too.
3. Set clear goals every time you practice. These could be as specific as "I'm going to perfect these two measures" or as general as "I just want to play to blow off some steam after a tough day of work." Either way, always have an objective.
4. To that end, a locked-in, 20-minute practice session is better than spending 2 hours "practicing" but scrolling TikTok for most of the time.
5. Practice makes *permanent*, not perfect. Whatever you practice becomes habit.
6. A 1% improvement is still an improvement. Aim to improve one thing every time you play.

Resources

Metronomes: [Google](#) (built-in) | [Web](#) | [App](#) (what I currently use)

Tuner: [App](#) (what I currently use)

Fingering charts: [Woodwinds](#) | [Brass](#) | [Mallets?](#) (printable keyboard)

Questions? Email me!

I'm here to help, and no relevant question is stupid. My email is rcox@theproutschool.org.