

**April 2018**

**Greetings from the Madison Music Department!**

My name is Aaron West and I am the Band Director at Madison Jr./Sr. High School. This is an exciting time in your student's career at Madison. As 4<sup>th</sup> grade is coming to a close and 5<sup>th</sup> grade is on the horizon, the opportunity is soon provided to take part in the Mohawk Band Program! The program prides itself on being one of the largest extra curricular groups in the Madison community with as many as 200 students involved in some capacity in grades 5-12! We think of ourselves as our own family and we hope your student AND you are ready to get involved! I am so excited to have you along for the ride.

The Mohawk Band is such a great group in which to be involved. Obviously, being a music teacher now, I can testify how life-changing participation in band can be. Students are in an environment surrounded by peers who all have a passion for an activity they CHOOSE to do. They are also provided unique performance opportunities that eventually take them all over the Middletown, Ohio region and even the country! Best of all, students develop unique, strong bonds with one another that carry on well beyond their school years. We pride ourselves in creating a home for any student, from athletes to scholars and everything in between. The lessons learned through band extend well beyond the musical curriculum and advance students' performance in other activities and life in general, including team work, punctuality, creativity, leadership, accountability, and so much more.

If you are interested in getting your student involved in the program, let me draw your attention to a very important opportunity happening yet this school year!

The beginning band process will begin on **Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**. We will host full instrument fittings for ALL 4<sup>th</sup> grade students that evening at the high school in the auditorium from 6:00-8:30pm. This is a new and exciting step we are tweaking this year. Students will have the opportunity to try out as many instruments as they would like while being assisted by a professional or an advanced high school student for each instrument. These helpers will then rate your student's performance on each instrument. The students' experience combined with their rating will hopefully help promote excitement for an instrument that they not only enjoy, but realize they are skilled to handle. This eliminates the potential for a student to pick an instrument they THINK would be cool to play, even if they are not individually built to be successful on the instrument. For this event, we partner with

a local music vendor from Centerville, Hauer Music, who will help provide instruments for our use and will also provide rental information for instruments before you leave that night.

From there, hopefully your student will be ready and excited to start their Mohawk Band career! You then have the entire summer to consider instrument rental or other means of acquiring an instrument and your student has the summer to play around and get comfortable with the instrument.

Regular band class will then begin at the start of next year. I meet with band students once a week, organized by instrument section. This means students WILL NOT miss any time in other specials, a common myth associated with participating in band!

I am so excited to welcome the new crop into the Mohawk Band Family! I know there are a ton of questions and curiosities that cannot be stuffed into one simple letter, so if you have anything further, please do not hesitate to reach out to me this week! The easiest way is through email, but you are also welcome to call my office – [aaron.west@madisonmohawks.org](mailto:aaron.west@madisonmohawks.org) | (513) 420-4760 ext. 2501

I sincerely look forward to meeting every 4<sup>th</sup> grader in the coming days and weeks! Please be sure to mark your calendars for the May 18<sup>th</sup> event!

Regards,



**Aaron R. West**

**Director of Bands**

**Madison Local Schools**

**Don't miss us for beginning band instrument fittings on Friday, May 18 from 6:30-8:00pm in the high school auditorium!**

**This is free and open to ALL current Madison 4<sup>th</sup> grade students!**