

INCOMING 5TH GRADE BAND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How often and when does the 5th grade band meet during the week?

A: The 5th grade band meets twice per week. One day is dedicated to instrument specific sectionals on a rotating schedule. For example, Flute Players receive their lesson at 8:00 one week, 9:00 the next week, 10:00 the next, etc. to ensure they are not missing consistent classwork from any one particular subject. The second day is for group band practice and it meets during study skills. Attendance for these meetings is based upon the permission from your student's teacher. Should you have concerns about your student's academics, we can find collaborative solutions between you, myself, and the fifth grade team. They are awesome educators.

Q: How many concerts will my student have as a 5th grader?

A: The 5th grade band will have the opportunity to showcase what they have learned at the winter concert in December, at Red, White, and Beautiful open house night in April, and the spring concert in May. They also have the opportunity to perform during the school day in the spring when the fourth graders come to visit, but that one is a kids-only event!

Q: Should I register my child for band if I don't know what he/she wants to play?

A: You should definitely register your student for band whether or not they know *what* they are interested in playing. Students will have the opportunity to try and select an instrument during school on Wednesday, August 28. If you did not pre-register your child for band, fear not as this process can be completed once they decide to join the team at the beginning band meeting on Thursday, August 29th at 6:30PM in the Benjamin Multi-Purpose Room. There is a yearly fee for participation in the program that helps cover our various costs. If you know your child will be in band, you can pay that fee beforehand. If you come to the meeting and your child decides they want to join, the fee can be taken care of at that time. The fee is \$75 for one student, \$125 for two students in the program. Financial assistance is available for those who qualify.

Q: How will my child choose an instrument to play?

A: On Tuesday, August 27 a group of stellar 8th grade band students will demonstrate the various instruments available to your student. During school on Wednesday, August 28 we have a team of music educators that helps students find the right fit for them and the students get to try their top choices. Instruments offered in the program include Flute, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Trumpet, Horn, Trombone, Baritone/Euphonium, Tuba, and Percussion. If you already own an

instrument and would like your child to make use of it, let Mr. Turek know and your student to share this information during the Wednesday instrument-try-out. The goal is for them to choose an instrument by the end of the day. Students that are interested in playing percussion are required to have 2 years of piano experience and will have an audition to ensure proper balance and a great experience for all students. If you and/or your student is not able to attend the instrument-try-out, the Thursday evening meeting, you may schedule an instrument try-out with Mr. Turek for a time TBD. Please make every effort to be there, as I am only one man and there is only so much time, but we make every effort possible to get your child involved!

Q: Do I have to purchase an instrument or are there other options?

A: Instruments do not have to be purchased. They can be rented monthly through Music and Arts, the company with whom our school district partners. There are also certain instruments that the school owns and rents to the student because of how costly they are or cumbersome for youngsters to carry. The school owns a number of French Horns that can be rented to students and carried back and forth. Students that play baritone will need to rent an instrument for practice at home but will be able to bring their mouthpiece back and forth for use with a school instrument. Students who play tuba will also have access to an instrument at home and be responsible purchasing a mouthpiece to bring back and forth.

Q: About how much does it cost for instrument rental per month?

A: Rentals are on a rent-to-own style contract, which is nice for a variety of reasons. Costs are broken down according to the list below:

Group A	clarinet, flute, percussion practice kit, trumpet, trombone	\$30/month
Group B	Alto Sax	\$40/month
Group C	Euphonium/Baritone	\$60/month

This activity does cost money because it is worthwhile. ***If money is a concern for your family, PLEASE reach out to me as we will find a solution.*** Money should not be the deciding factor whether your child receives a well-rounded education that includes performance music.

Other fees so that they do not surprise you:

- If you rent, there is a monthly insurance option. I recommend it, as you never know.
- Cleaning supplies and oil/grease- purchase as needed but a little goes a long way, roughly \$15 up front
- A method book- this is our “textbook” so to speak, \$10
- Reeds for clarinet and saxophone – \$20-\$35 for a box of ten that would last a school year with careful handling ☺
- Building a sheet music library! Just like it is important to have books around your house, a fun gift for your child is a book of music from their favorite movies, bands, holiday tunes, patriotic music, etc. Building a library encourages practice and is just plain fun!

Q: How much time should my child be practicing on their own at home?

A: Playing an instrument is physical, intellectual, and emotional. All of these facets are honed through concentrated practice. Ways that you can help as a parent:

- Encourage your child when you hear them practice.
- Remember this is a long-term game. Small incremental investments add up big time over months and years, but there will seem to be huge spikes of improvement, and everything in between, especially at the beginning.
- Ask them questions about what they are working on and what songs they like to play.
- Do not use practice as a punishment, but instead help them set up responsible and healthy habits for practice. A routine is best practice. Always before/after dinner, before/after starting homework, etc.
- Small increments daily are more effective than long sessions sporadically.
- Ensure they have a quiet place as free of distraction as possible (no TV, phone, other people walking around and talking, etc.)

Q: What if my child wants to switch to another instrument or quit band during the school year?

A: This does not come up as often as you might think but it does happen. My response is tailored to each specific situation but my philosophy goes like this. Sometimes, your student would be more motivated on a different instrument and would experience more musical enjoyment from a different instrument. If they understand the work it will require to change, we make every effort we can to meet students at their interest level. However, if your student is desiring change because they are simply not putting in the work to be successful and they think it will somehow be different if only they played an X, then that is a non-starter.

Q: What if my child doesn't want to join band at the beginning of 5th grade, but they want to join later in the year?

A: *It is highly recommended to start in 5th grade.* But hey, sometimes students don't realize what they are missing until they start missing it! If a 5th grade student wants to join band at a later point in the school year, then a parent can set up a meeting with myself and their student so we can talk about instrument selection and how to proceed with band. The best starting times for band are at the beginning of the school year and in January after the holiday break. If a student wants to start in January, please set up a meeting with me in December so we can choose an instrument and get your student set up with books, registration, a plan for the break, and an instructional schedule. My recommendation is to come check it out up front! It is easier to ride the train from the station rather than running to catch up!

Q: What if my child didn't play in the band in 5th grade, but wants to join as a 6th, 7th, or 8th grader?

A: If your student wants to make music, that is what our program is here for! If they wish to start in a later grade level, they need to understand the work it will take to catch up their peers. If you are on the fence about the commitment, my recommendation is to jump in and do not wait! Odds are, it is going to be awesome.