

# Everything you wanted to know about beginning band, but now you don't have to ask!.....

## How Did My Child Pick Out An Instrument?

- Students took a survey which evaluates different musical skills they have
- Each student had the opportunity to try three different instruments with a teacher to see which one fit the best
- Our band needs a balanced instrumentation. 100 saxophones and 50 drummers does NOT make a balanced sound
- The survey scores really DO help us choose the very best instrument for your child. We also take into account teacher recommendations and body shape and size. You know your child best, but use all this information to make the best decision.

## How Do I Get Started?

- Rent an instrument from one of the local music stores. Brochures for each program are attached.
- Double check the instrument/accessory requirements sheet to make sure you have ordered all of the needed supplies
- Reeds, oils, cork grease, etc. are a necessary expense to keep the instrument working properly. Please keep this in mind as you make your instrument selection. Beginners go through a lot of reeds at the very beginning, and this is normal. It will settle down, as the child becomes more experienced.
- If you are borrowing an instrument, please make sure it is in clean, proper working order. There is nothing more frustrating than to try and learn on a horn that doesn't work.
- Used instruments are for sale through GMS, please check the GMS Band Website for more details
- The students will be instructed on how to properly care for and clean their instruments. These instruments are not "toys", and will need to be well taken care of to prevent expensive repairs and replacement.

- Summer band lessons are an important start to a successful band year. If the school sessions do not work with your family schedule, please consider private instruction over the summer months. There is a sign up sheet attached for GMS summer band lessons.

### **As A Parent, What is My Responsibility?**

- At first, your child will practice ALL THE TIME. Then they won't. This is normal. Your job as parents is to NAG, NAG, NAG! Their assigned practice is what they are graded on. This is the same as homework in any other subject.
- At first, your child will only be able to practice for a 10-15 minute stretch. Consistent, daily practice will build up their endurance. 20-30 minutes every day is MUCH better than a 90-minute marathon session.
- Most students do best with an assigned daily practice time. Right after school, after dinner, before school, WHATEVER works best with your family schedule. Try to make this special time a part of your family routine.
- Parent support means more to these kids than anything. If you are interested in their practicing, even when it sounds really unusual (which it will those first few days!), find something *positive* to say about their efforts. Try playing "Hot Cross Buns" on their instrument; they will get a kick out of showing mom or dad how to play! Most kids do not enjoy being banished to the garage to practice!

### **What Do The Kids Do In Band During the School Year?**

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade band is a prerequisite for 6<sup>th</sup> grade band. Please sign up now! It is frustrating for everyone (child, parent and teacher) to be playing catch up for an entire year or more,
- Band is a graded class, just like math or science. They will be expected to complete their assignments, and to do their homework (at home practicing). There will be tests to prepare for, both written and playing exams. All grading is done on a point value basis.
- Lessons are offered during the school day. Each student will receive one ten-minute band lesson per week. The lessons are scheduled around the other specials and remain at the same time each week. This lesson time is where the student receives individual attention, and is very important for their progress.

- Full band rehearsals are scheduled on the large noon recess twice a week. They are not missing class time to attend band rehearsals. Attendance is required at these rehearsals.
  
- Band grading requirements per quarter:
  - signed grading sheet weekly
  - 15 minutes **daily** of practice time on assigned material
  - some worksheets, tests throughout the year
  - level one lesson book completed during the first year of band
  - playing exams on the concert music and scales
  - faithful attendance at the noon recess rehearsals
  - must remember to bring music and instrument on band and lesson days
  - We offer three concerts per year. Attendance is required. They are nighttime concerts at our Hortonville High School Auditorium, beginning at 6:30 p.m.
  
- Will these kids have to work at this?? YES!! Will it be worth all the hard work??  
ABSOLUTELY!!