

September 28, 2021

McGraw Elementary Band Lessons

Every year, students in grades 4 and 5 have the opportunity to take part in the school band program. This program gives students the chance to learn a wind band instrument as part of the school day. Students participating in band will have a short lesson every week during the school day. As students progress, they will also participate in ensemble rehearsals.

The options for instrument study are flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion (bells and drum). Students have been seeing demonstrations of these instruments in their music classes.

All students will need an instrument in order to participate in lessons and band. **The best way to ensure that your child is playing their choice of instrument is to provide your own instrument through rental or purchase.** The school district has a number of school instruments available to borrow for the school year at no charge. Students needing a school instrument may not receive their first choice of instrument, but every effort will be made to offer students an instrument to study.

If you are interested in having your child join the band program, please fill out the attached paper as soon as possible, including your choice of instrument(s) and how you plan to get the instrument. Once instruments are selected and received, students will be scheduled for instrument lessons.

Thank you for your interest and support in the McGraw music program. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Joseph Ford

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Important Questions about the Band Program

What instruments can my child learn?

The main options for instrument study are flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion (bells and drum).

Other band instruments include the French horn, baritone/euphonium, tuba, oboe, and bassoon. I do not normally recommend starting on these instruments due to size, difficulty, and availability, but could offer lessons on them if a family has the instrument already or if there is very high interest.

How can I get an instrument?

Local music stores offer opportunities to rent beginner level instruments for the school year. The rental cost for a year is substantially lower than the cost for purchasing a quality beginner instrument for most instruments. For this reason I *highly recommend* renting over purchasing for beginning students. I will provide a list of local stores and reliable instrument brands after I receive the sign up information.

If you already own a band instrument, I am happy to play test the instrument to see if any minor repairs are needed.

The school has a number of instruments available to borrow at no cost. If you wish to be considered for use of a school instrument, please understand that your child may not get her or his first choice of instrument due to the number of instruments we have.

The best way to ensure your child learns the instrument of their choice is to provide one through purchase or rental.

Is there anything other than an instrument needed?

All band students, regardless of where they get their instrument, will need some instrument accessories (reeds, cleaning materials, etc.). A list of these accessories will be provided once your instrument is selected. The school has a supply of lesson books, though it is recommended to provide your own if possible. It is also highly recommended that students have a music stand at home for practice.

What are the time and practice obligations?

Students who participate in the band program will be expected to practice, outside of school, for five days a week. During the school day, students will have a twenty minute lesson each week and, eventually, a thirty minute group rehearsal each week. *It is the responsibility of the student to cover work missed during lesson and rehearsal time.* Finally, students will be expected to attend all band performances scheduled through the year. These could be live or virtual events as circumstances dictate.

**Please return this form as soon as possible but no later than
Friday, October 8, 2021 in order to sign up for Band Lessons**

Student Name _____

Grade ____ **Teacher** _____

Parent Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____ **Work Phone** _____

Cell phone _____ **OK to text?** _____

E-mail _____

Please select from the following:

_____ **We are interested in renting the following instrument. Please send information about local rental options and enroll my child in band lessons.**

Flute _____

Trumpet _____

Clarinet _____

Trombone _____

Alto Saxophone _____

Percussion (Bells and Drums) _____

_____ **We already own the following instrument. Please enroll our child in the music program and send home any information about books and accessories.**

Flute _____

Trumpet _____

Clarinet _____

Trombone _____

Alto Saxophone _____

Percussion (Bells and Drums) _____

_____ **We are interested in using one of the following school instruments. We understand that inventory is limited and that this is not a guarantee of an instrument. (Please check all that apply and rate in order of choice.)**

____ **Trumpet**

____ **Flute**

____ **Trombone**

____ **Clarinet**

____ **Saxophone**

____ **Percussion**

_____ **We are willing to rent the above instrument if a school instrument is not available.**