

PLAYING A BAND INSTRUMENT – WHAT TO EXPECT

Welcome to that worldwide family of parents and students who have and are experiencing the wonderful world of band. The District instrumental music teachers hope this will be just the beginning of a life-long adventure with music.

IMPORTANT NOTE, before getting started: While the teachers try to make learning to play a musical instrument as enjoyable as possible, it is a fact that the learning process is not always going to be fun. There will be times when the learning is tough as well as times that are extremely easy. Like anything worthwhile, learning to play a musical instrument requires patience, a willingness to stick with it, and hard work. This is important to remember the first day and every day thereafter.

FIRST LESSONS (at Linntown):

The students will be picked up at their classrooms for the first two lessons. After that, the students will receive a schedule and will be responsible for attending the lesson at the proper time.

WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR INSTRUMENT and SUPPLIES:

- *Fill out the case identification tag – many cases look alike.
- *Print the child's full name and homeroom number on the outside of the front cover of the book.
- *Keep the music stand and accompaniment CD at home.
- *Bring the following to each lesson: instrument, lesson book, reeds, oil, slide cream, etc.
- *BE CAREFUL with your instrument – it can be damaged very easily, and it only fits into the case one way. Please do not attempt to force anything into place.

SCHEDULED LESSONS & BAND:

LESSONS: one small group lesson each six-day cycle, scheduled on a rotating basis.

Therefore, students will not miss the same classroom subject for each lesson. The student is responsible for all work missed in the classroom while attending the lesson.

BAND: Band rehearsals for 5th grade band musicians are scheduled each cycle, starting in late November. During this rehearsal, the teacher reinforces the skills learned during the small group lesson and prepares for a few low pressure performances

PRACTICE IS A MUST! The student must practice, at home, between each lesson!

- * First Three Months: at least 10 - 15 minutes each day.
- * After First Three Months: at least 20 minutes each day.
- * Practice at least six days between each lesson.
- * Do parents need to remind their child to practice? YES, especially after the newness and excitement of the instrument and lessons has worn off. The music teachers expect and encourage parents to monitor their child's practicing routine.
- * A practice record will be attached to the inside cover of the lesson book. Parents – please initial the record each week.

SECURING A BAND INSTRUMENT:

Use a lease-to-own plan. We recommend that you contact one of the following band instrument dealerships:

Haines Music, Selinsgrove (374-2263)

Robert M. Sides Family Music Center, Williamsport (326-9450)

If you already have a used instrument, take it to a reputable instrument repair shop, such as Haines or Sides, to have it thoroughly checked. The instrument must be in excellent playing condition by the time that lessons begin!

The school can loan, in limited quantities, certain large and more expensive band instruments.

These include the Bassoon, Baritone, and Tuba.

REPORT OF STUDENT PROGRESS:

- * The grading policy is a separate handout. Parents are asked to sign and return the first page (receipt for materials).
- * After the first marking period, a report card will be sent home at the end of each grading period.
- * Contact the music teacher, at any time, if you have questions, concerns, etc.

PERFORMANCES (Grade 5):

- * Performances provide extra interest and added motivation.
- * Demonstration concert ("Informance") in February. Date & time to be announced later.
- * Perform at Linntown's annual Community Day in April.
- * **Mark your calendar** -- Perform with Prep Band at Middle School Spring Band Concert
May 26, 2004, 9:30 am & 7:30 pm.

SUMMER LESSONS (Grades 5, 6, & 7) -- VERY IMPORTANT!

- * Cost - \$40 (small group lesson)
- * One lesson each week, for four weeks (3rd week of June through the 2nd week of July)
- * Importance for participating:
Improves skills with instrument; Gives student reason to practice; Gain more experience;
Eliminates need for teacher to re-teach skills that the child forgot.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6 - 8):

- * Lessons continue - once each six-day cycle
- * Performance groups:
Prep Band (6th grade), Advanced Band (mostly 7th & 8th grades), Winter Brass Choir (7th & 8th grades), & Jazz-Rock Ensemble (7th & 8th grades).
- * Rehearsals (each 6-day cycle):
 - Prep Band - two times, during Activity Periods
 - Advanced Band – four times (twice during Activity Periods and twice before school at 7:20 am).
 - Jazz-Rock Ensemble - Starting in January, once before school at 7:10 am
- * Performances: Winter Concert (December) & Spring Concert (May)
- * Other Opportunities: If selected, participate in Susquehanna Valley Band (7th & 8th grades)

HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9 - 12):

- * Continue lessons "Labs" - once each six-day cycle
- * Performance groups: Band, Orchestra, Jazz Band, small ensembles
- * Performances: Football games, Parades, Winter & Spring Concerts, Trips, etc.
- * Other Opportunities: Audition for and participate in Susquehanna Valley Band and Pennsylvania Music Educators Association District, Region, and State Bands and Orchestras.