

Dear 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents,

The end of the 2021-2022 school year is quickly approaching and as you speak to your child about their next school year, we would like to take the opportunity to tell you a little about the LMS band program and how your child can get involved. Below is some information based on many frequently asked questions:

**What will my student do in band class?**

- ♪ Learn/review basic music reading skills
- ♪ Practice note reading, notation, and rhythm reading skills on a regular basis
- ♪ Learn specific skills on chosen instruments
- ♪ Play varied music alone and as a group
- ♪ Practice time management and goal setting skills by developing practice plans and goals
- ♪ Practice critical listening skills through listening to and reflecting on various types of music
- ♪ Work on constructive criticism skills by listening to and evaluating our group performances
- ♪ Practice teamwork and group discussion skills

**What does my child have to do outside of class for band?**

- ♪ Each student is responsible for his or her own practice time and homework assignments
- ♪ Students practice to complete homework assignments out of the assigned music book
- ♪ Students will prepare for periodic playing assessments given in class
- ♪ 6<sup>th</sup> grade band will participate in 4 concerts that are graded performances outside of school

Click [here](#) to view a video made a couple of years ago by our school band seniors. They worked really hard on it and it has some great information!

**What does the instrument fitting involve?**

Starting Tuesday, March 22nd, we will begin fitting students for brass and woodwind instruments. Percussion tryouts will happen in the fall during class time. All students will be participating unless Mrs. Jones is notified in advance.

Brass and Woodwind fittings will allow students the opportunity to see the full instrument and try the mouthpiece of that instrument to see if they like the feel of it. Students will try all four Brass and Woodwind instruments including

- 1) Flute
- 2) Clarinet
- 3) Trumpet
- 4) Trombone

Brass and woodwind fittings will consist of assessing the student's ability to:

- 1) Produce a sound on the instrument's mouthpiece only
- 2) Hold the instrument properly and with natural ease
- 3) Produce a sound characteristic of that instrument when it is completely assembled. For brass instruments we will also look for the student's ability to match and sustain pitch.

Students who wish to play Alto Saxophone will start on Clarinet in the fall and have the option to move to Alto Saxophone the following year unless they have already started in another school district or if they have already taken private lessons with a professional teacher. Please contact Mrs. Jones to discuss this option.

**Students who wish to try out for our percussion section should go through the fitting process now and enroll in band for the fall based on their choice of brass or woodwind instrument. As with years past, we will only be selecting 10 students for each beginning band to participate in the percussion sections. We will give further information about this process after school begins in the fall.**

<p><b>If you do not wish for your student to participate in the instrument fitting, please contact Mrs. Jones via email at <a href="mailto:becky.jones@usd469.net">becky.jones@usd469.net</a> prior to testing starting</b></p>
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## FAQ's

### **What brass and woodwind instruments will my student be allowed to play in 6<sup>th</sup> grade band?**

All students can choose from the following instruments: Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet and Trombone to start. Percussionists, again, will be invited to play in that section through an audition in the fall. Towards the end of their 6<sup>th</sup> grade year, students will have the opportunity to expand their playing by trying other instruments such as Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, Horn, Baritone and Tuba. **PLEASE NOTE THAT CLARINET STUDENTS WILL BE GIVEN FIRST OPPORTUNITY WITH REGARDS TO SWITCHING TO ANY SAXOPHONE.**

### **How will I know what instrument my student should play?**

After fittings are complete, we will send out information that will address your student's fitting and will give you our recommendations as to which instrument we believe they would have the most success playing based on their fitting outcomes as well as what they indicated they want to play after trying everything. We understand that some students may already have an idea of what they want to play, and we want to do whatever we can to accommodate their wishes. However, we do ask that you keep an open mind and know that our recommendations are based on what we believe is in the best interest of your child and their success in band, in our professional opinion as musicians and music teachers.

### **Instruments are expensive! How will I afford this?**

We have several options available to for parents who have concerns about purchasing an instrument. We will briefly discuss options regarding instrument rentals at our band information night listed below.

### **What happens after the fitting?**

After the fitting there will be an informational meeting for parents of students who are interested in participating in band on **Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm in the LMS Band Room**. At this short meeting you will receive information about the LMS band program and how your student will be involved. **We highly encourage all parents of students interested in band to attend this meeting** as there will be a great deal of information covered. Please see the following link for access to our band calendar: [Band Calendar](#)

Also, please visit our band website at: [Band Website](#)

### **Do I need to purchase an instrument now?**

No, you do not need to purchase anything at this time. We will have an instrument rental event in the fall to help you get your child's instrument secured before we start playing for the year.

### **I am not a musician! How can I help my student if I don't know anything about band?**

This is a great question and a very valid concern. I would highly encourage you to check out the book "The Music Parents' Guide – A Survival Kit for the New Music Parent" by Anthony Mazzocchi for some great insight into what to expect as a band parent and how you can help your child succeed in music. It is \$6.99 on Amazon.com and a very quick, easy read. Also, visit his blog at [musicparentsguide.com](http://musicparentsguide.com) for some great articles and answers to questions. As always, you can also contact Mrs. Jones or Mr. Vignery with any questions or concerns you might have as well.

If you have any questions about instrument fitting, the band programs in the Lansing School District or if you just have questions about band in general, please don't hesitate to call. We can also be reached through the email addresses listed below.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to meeting all of your children!

Sincerely,

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Lansing Middle School  
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