

BAND @ PARKLAND

Information for
potential Band Students
and Parents

Director of Bands

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2024 Band recruitment dates:

- 4/16—Recruiting Concert @ VV & RW
- Week of 4/15— classroom visits at VV, RW & LM
- Weeks of 4/29, 5/6 & 5/13 — AM Instrument fitting appointments @ Parkland
- 5/14— PM instrument fitting appointments @ Parkland

Instruments available at the start of the year

- Flute
- Clarinet
- Trumpet
- Trombone
- Percussion

Additional instruments available in January

- Oboe
- Bassoon
- Bass Clarinet
- Alto Saxophone
- Tenor Saxophone
- Baritone Saxophone
- French Horn
- Euphonium
- Tuba

IT'S TIME TO JOIN BAND AT PARKLAND!

If your child is currently enrolled in 5th grade, this is an exciting time. They are eligible to become part of a fun, music-making team by joining the Parkland band program next year! The only requirement is a desire to learn more about music, learn how to play an instrument, and to be part of a fun team!



Arts-related subjects have a positive impact on every area of study in school. In addition, band provides opportunities for community involvement, leadership development, travel, and social development. Contrary to what many parents think, it is quite easy and very cost-effective to be a part of the band due to flexible instrument rental programs and an atmosphere of cooperation designed to have every child enjoy this potentially meaningful experience.

JOINING BAND IS EASY!

To join band, there's only three things that you need to do before the end of the year:

1. Register for band using the google form that can be found on our websites, emails, and in skyward registration for next year
2. Attend an instrument fitting appointment before the end of the school year or simply select your top instrument choices—**see the next page for details.**
3. Reserve an instrument for the following school year after you have been assigned to one (supply issues may make this challenging if you wait)



If you believe that band has the potential to be part of your child's future, please read over the very important information on the next few pages.

-A study of Missouri public schools in 2010 found that greater arts education led to fewer disciplinary infractions and higher attendance, graduation rates and test scores.

*“Every artist was at first an amateur.” -
Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The College Entrance Examination Board reports the following:

“Students of the arts continue to outperform their non-arts peers on the SAT. In 2000, SAT takers with coursework/experience in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and 41 points higher on the math portion than students with no coursework/experience in the arts.”

INSTRUMENT FITTINGS

OPTIONAL BUT HIGHLY ENCOURAGED

Students may come to Parkland to meet Mr. Berens and try instruments and be evaluated to see which instrument physically suits them best. Alternatively, students may simply select the instruments they are most interested in and be assigned an instrument for the year.

Instrument fitting appointments will occur at Parkland, primarily in the morning before classes begin at the elementary schools. There will be additional evening appointments available during the week of May 15th for those that cannot attend in the morning. Parents who register their child for Band will receive an invitation via email to sign up for one of these appointments or to help their child rank instruments based on personal preference after reading about and hearing each one.



Once appointments have concluded, data gathered will be analyzed and students will be assigned to play one their choices. In previous years, the vast majority of students have been assigned to their first choice. After their first concert, they can opt to be re-evaluated for a switch.

INSTRUMENT SELECTION

- Your child will rank instruments so they are assigned to an instrument on which they will likely find success and enjoyment.
- Mr. Berens will assign instruments from those choices to produce a balanced blend of instruments so that the band is more likely to have a positive group experience.

Factors that should influence what instrument a child chooses:

- They like the sound it produces
- Physical characteristics which allow the student to produce a quality sound
- Work ethic
- Interest in private lessons
- Needs of the band

Poor reasons to choose an instrument

- It's what you can get for free
- Friends decide what to play together
- Older siblings played it
- Parents want their child to play their favorite instrument

BAND IS A CLASS



- Large group meets daily for 30 minutes.
- Smaller group lessons meet once per week and are pulled from a two class rotation. Students only miss each class once every other week.
- Students receive a grade on their report card.
- Practice, effort, and improvement are expected.
- Students will be expected to learn to read music and perform on their instruments to a high standard.
- At least 3 mandatory concerts will be presented throughout the school year.

ENROLLING IN BOTH BAND AND CHORUS

- Yes! You can be in both Band and Chorus!
- Recommended only for self-motivated students who traditionally receive good grades on their report cards
- Students will alternate days attending Band and Chorus
- Students will receive a small group lesson each week for both classes, resulting in one absence from each of the two classes per week
- Students will be held to the same standard as those enrolled only in band



Top 10 skills children learn from the Arts:

1. Creativity
2. Confidence
3. Problem –Solving
4. Perseverance
5. Focus
6. Non-verbal communication
7. Receiving constructive feedback
8. Collaboration
9. Dedication
10. Accountability

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DON'T GET STUCK WITH A LEMON!

WAIT UNTIL AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT TO GET AN INSTRUMENT

- Recommended that you rent an instrument through Quinlan and Fabish
- Avoid “off brand” instruments—they may not play well for more than a couple months.
- Many of these are very inexpensive because they are made with poor materials, soft metals, inferior craftsmanship, and Non-standard parts
- Many have poor tone quality and tuning qualities.
- Learning an instrument can be difficult and a poor instrument can make it nearly impossible.
- Local music stores may not be able to make repairs because parts are often not readily available. Call them to check before buying!
- **NOTE: there are potential supply chain issues that may make it difficult to find a quality instrument at the start of next school. Make sure to reserve yours quickly after being assigned one to avoid this potential issue.**

“You are what you repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.” - Aristotle

Frequently Asked Questions

Are students required to know how to play an instrument to join?

Absolutely NOT! If a child has experience, this will be a plus as he or she learns to play a band instrument. However, the vast majority of students who join the 6th Grade Band do not know how to play an instrument and have little to no musical experience.

Do students have to audition to be in the band?

Nope! While band is designed to challenge students and help them grow into young musicians, it is also designed to be accessible to all students, regardless of prior knowledge or ability.

Is band a safe activity with Covid-19?

Please know that not a single case of Covid-19 was traced back to band at Parkland as of the publishing of this newsletter since the pandemic started in 2020. We use a combination of bell covers with MERV-13 filters, optional musician's face masks, social distancing when possible, limited rehearsal length, and a large air filter to mitigate the inherent risk related to the virus.

Does band ever meet after school?

There are a few reasons to stay after school for band, none of which are mandatory. Mr. Berens will hold one after school opportunity each week where students can come in for extra help or to practice together. Additionally, if students participate in extra activities such as Solo and Ensemble Contest of Fox Valley Honors Band, there may be some after school responsibilities.

How do students acquire an instrument and other materials?

The most recommended way to acquire your instrument is through Quinlan and Fabish, our partner music store.. You are not required to rent through Q & F and there are variety of other local stores to choose from. In most cases, if Mr. Berens and the student decide that an instrument change is a good idea, the instrument may be swapped at no charge. Parents should check with the instrument dealer of their choice to find a rental plan that will work best for them.

Is it OK to use or purchase a used instrument?

It is quite possible to find good deals on used instruments! You can find them at music store, or even online. Many families have quality older instruments available to them through friends, siblings, parents, or even grandparents who once participated in band. If you are going to use an instrument that has not been played in a while or are purchasing a used instrument, make sure you have either a band director or music store look at it very closely and have it "play tested". There is a good possibility it may need repairs or refurbishment in order for it to be playable. It is definitely worth the repair expense if it is a quality instrument. However, if you find a deal that appears to be "too good to be true," it probably is. Many instruments are being mass produced under names that are not reputable. These instruments are inexpensive but are usually poorly constructed, are more difficult to play, and break easily. Instrument repair shops often will not work on one of these instruments. In band director circles, these are referred to as ISOs—Instrument Shaped Objects.

A student's success can be highly influenced by the quality of their instrument. You are highly encouraged to inquire with Mr. Berens if you find what seems to be an outstanding deal.

How much time should be spent practicing?

The best way to ensure success on an instrument is to practice regularly! The recommendation for Parkland Band students is to attain 100 minutes per week. The most effective way to balance practice time is to spread it over 5 days at 20 minutes each day. Practicing regularly reinforces the classroom instruction and helps develop good fundamentals and habits.

Are students required to take private lessons?

It is our policy to highly encourage private lessons because students who take private lessons often experience greater success and enjoyment in band. However, band students are not required to study privately.

Is Band a class or a club?

Structurally, band is officially a class. However, it functions as more of a combination of a class, a club, and a sport.

More Frequently Asked Questions

Will my child receive a grade for band?

Yes, students will receive grades. If you've heard of students saying that it is hard to receive an A in band, it's likely because those students didn't turn in any assignments, did not come to many lessons, and/or didn't take advantage of any extra credit. Rarely do students who show consistent effort end up with a grade lower than an A regardless of their confidence, knowledge, or performance ability.

Can I withdraw my child if they dislike it or find it too challenging to balance with their other classes?

Yes, they can drop for the first week of each trimester. After the drop period for each trimester passes, students must remain enrolled until the next drop period. Extenuating circumstances may facilitate a drop outside of the drop period.

How much will band cost?

Many people believe that the costs of band can be prohibitive to joining. For most families, the cost is slight. For others, costs can be lowered. You should find that band is quite affordable.

These costs are not necessarily exact for everyone and many are approximations based on many variables. This is simply meant to be a realistic list so that there are not surprises.

Initial Cost

- If you purchase an instrument outright or refurbish an old instrument, those would be your only initial costs to joining band. Prices vary greatly. Renting is recommended.

Yearly Cost

- District 15 Band Registration Fee—\$10 (paid after the start of the year)
- Band Supplies—Specific costs are yet to be determined for the coming year, but this year students received ALL of their general band supplies through the band program, eliminating the need for shopping and enabling you to receive them at a lower cost. Prices were specific to the needs of the student and ran from \$19—\$45, covering all supplies including books, binders, web subscriptions, shirts, music stands, and more!

Ongoing Costs

- Instrument rental—**\$39 to \$63** per month from Quinlan and Fabish
 - This is a rent-to-own program and includes regular maintenance
 - A small number of school loaners are available for economically disadvantaged families at no cost
- Instrument-specific supplies
 - Brass instruments/Flute—less than \$10 per year
 - Clarinet/Saxophone—less than \$40 per year
 - Oboe/Bassoon—about \$100 per year
- Maintenance—greatly depends on which instrument your child has chosen, how often you have it serviced, and how well the instrument has been taken care of. While you are renting, maintenance should be included in the rental price. If you own your instrument outright, I would budget for \$100 a year
- Private lessons (optional) - The cost of private lessons can vary depending on the teacher but are often between \$15 and \$25 per 30 minute lesson.

I have more questions that were not answered here...

Don't hesitate to contact Mr. Kyle Berens, the band director at Parkland.

Email (preferred): kberens@d15.org, Phone: 779-244-1700 x6810, website: www.d15.org/parklandband