

Junior High Band

Introduction

Calling all musicians--it's time to join band for next fall! Your child expressed interest in joining band and will soon be fitted to a band instrument by an educational consultant from Marshall Music Company. Keep reading to learn everything you need to know.

Benefits of Band

Band is a team . . . a non-competitive team that works together towards a common goal where everyone wins. Band students learn responsibility, cooperation, problem-solving, communication, independence, self-reliance, respect, and creativity. They explore ways to meaningfully express themselves and connect with peers. Learning to play an instrument opens doors to a lifetime of friendships, community connections, and self-expression. Even when our bodies start to creak and moan with old age, musicians can continue to play their instruments at home and with others by joining local music ensembles and community groups.

Class Schedule

Band is an elective class that meets during the school day and does not interfere with academic learning time or sports. Seventh graders must enroll in either band or gym. Starting in eighth grade, students may enroll in both band and gym. Although this is a tough decision for many sixth grade students, please remember that students must join band in seventh grade if they intend to learn an instrument. They may not take gym in seventh grade then join band in eighth grade. Band is a one-year commitment, and students choose each spring whether to continue playing an instrument the following school year. My advice? Try band for one year. You will make friends, learn an instrument, and play lots of great music. Who knows, the world's next greatest clarinet player might be in your band. Dare to amaze yourself!

Instrument Selection

Band is a team, and each member has an individual role. Like a basketball team, there are a variety of positions available to team members. A basketball team would not be comprised solely of forwards. Similarly, a band cannot be comprised solely of trumpet players. In fact, a successful band needs a balance of different instruments. Choosing the best instruments for children is complex. I consider students' preferences, physiological characteristics {teeth, lips, jaw, hands, arms}, aural skills {pitch matching ability}, and the instrumentation needs of the entire team. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about your child's instrument recommendation {that will be shared in March}.



Get an Instrument

There are four ways to obtain an instrument for band: participate in the rent-to-own program through Marshall Music; purchase and repair a used instrument; repair an instrument you already own; and borrow an instrument from Michigan Center School District. The details of all four methods will be shared in March. That being said, every single student who wants to participate in band will have access to an instrument, regardless of financial status. Period.

Common Questions

Who will teach seventh grade band? Ms. Micheel {elementary music educator} and Ms. Nietupski {secondary music educator} will team teach the seventh grade band. They have over 25 years of combined experience teaching band. Ms. Micheel is a woodwind specialist, and Ms. Nietupski is a brass specialist. It is our honor and privilege to make music with children from the time they enter Michigan Center Schools until they graduate.

Is this a multi-year commitment? No. Students commit to band one year at a time and must remain in band for the entire school year. Each spring students choose elective classes for the following school year. They may re-enroll in band at that time.

Are there any after-school commitments for band? Students will participate in a few evening concerts throughout the school year. Otherwise, band class takes place entirely during the school day. However, students may choose to participate in an optional after-school practice session one day per week during which they will make music in small groups with their friends.

May my child participate in band and sports? Absolutely! Ms. Nietupski was a varsity athlete herself, so she works closely with the junior high and high school coaching staffs to ensure students can participate in music and athletics without asking them to choose between their passions.

When does band begin? Since band is a class, it begins on the first day of school next fall.

What should my child know how to play by the first day of band? Nothing. We literally teach students how to open their instrument cases on the first day of class.

Contact Information

I hope you and your child are excited for the musical adventures ahead, and I am eager to help you get ready for band. Stay tuned for another handout in March that will help you enroll your child in band and obtain an instrument. In the meantime, please be in touch if you would like to discuss any of the information above or ask additional questions. Let the music-making begin!

Sincerely,

Ms. Micheel

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