

Why should my child join band class?

Music and Band specifically would not be part of our school's or state curriculum if students did not show some type of benefit from performing in the band. After prolonged experience in band, students show many improvements on different types of mathematical problems. Reading scores improve as well. Students who read music understand what note to play (foreign language), how long of a duration in time to give the note (mathematics), which finger to put down (physical dexterity), etc. Band also encourages self-discipline through practicing the instrument to improve.

What instrument(s) can my child learn in class?

Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Contrabass Clarinet, Bassoon, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, Cornet, Trumpet, Flugelhorn, French Horn, Mellophone, Trombone, Bass Trombone, Valve Trombone, Baritone, Euphonium, Tuba, Sousaphone, Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Timpani, Orchestra Bells, Chimes, Marimba, Vibraphone, Xylophone, Marching Quads / Quints, Piano, String Bass, Bass Guitar, Electric Guitar

How do I get an instrument for my child?

All parents who are interested in their child being in the band should come to the instrument display meeting held each September in the Sparta Lincoln band room. There will be representatives from Shivelbines Music Store from Marion, Illinois and Cape Girardeau, MO to speak and answer questions about their rent to own programs of both new and used instruments. These instruments are highly recommended to insure success in the band. Shivelbines only sells high quality instruments. Please understand what kind of payment plan you are entering into when renting an instrument if you rent from another source. Some stores will have programs where it is a rental only where you will not ever own the instrument. If you feel you have come across a "good deal" for an instrument for your child, check to see if it has the following manufacturers' name(s): Armstrong, Gemeinhardt, Artley, Noblet, Yamaha, Vito, Selmer, Bundy, Conn, Bach, Jupiter, Buffet, Blessing, Pearl or Ludwig are all good brands. Feel free to email me at kshasteen@sparta140.org if you have questions about a particular name.

DO NOT buy instruments from WalMart, Sam's Club, Kmart or other "retail" stores. These are very cheap instruments that will not play correctly the first time. Many instrument technicians will not fix these instruments due to the cheaper materials from which the instruments are manufactured.

What if I cannot make the instrument display meeting?

Parents can contact Mr. Shasteen at school [618-443-4341 Extension 1124](tel:618-443-4341) or email kshasteen@sparta140.org. Please feel free to make contact to find out information about your child joining the band if you cannot attend the instrument display meeting.

What if I already own an instrument my child is going to use?

Many times students will use family instruments, which is a way to save on the initial cost of joining band class. These instruments need to be checked out by a trained technician to make sure they are in good playing shape. If you can do this before school begins, this will insure your child has an instrument when lessons begin. If you are planning to attend the instrument display meeting, the staff of Shivelbines may be willing to check out the instrument.

How much should my child practice?

For best results, it is recommended that students do not try out their new instruments without instruction first. Bad habits are hard to change and sometimes trying it out without instruction leads to bad habits.

All band students within the district will have either lessons or full rehearsal every day or week. This is to ensure a good foundation on which to build. Students will leave their lessons understanding what they need to work on during the time between lessons and/or rehearsals. The ability level of students will be taken into consideration when assignments are given.

It is critical that students spend time each day practicing and preparing for their next lesson. Lack of progress in the band is a direct result of lack of practicing. As parents encourage and support their children to complete homework, this type of encouragement and support is also needed for the band on a daily basis. This suggested daily practice time is 30 minutes. This will ensure that the student will feel confidence and success with his/her new instrument. If a student does not adhere to the daily practice time, frustration will set in and the student may become overwhelmed. Rewards and incentives will be a part of the band program and will help to encourage students to practice.

What type of grading will be done?

Students will receive grades for Band class. These grades will be based on their progress and preparation for lessons and rehearsals. If there are questions concerning student progress, please feel free to contact Mr. Shasteen.

Do I need to do anything else after my child has started?

Parents can continue to help by setting up a routine of practice every day. This will be easy at first, but the newness does wear off and if there has not been a regular routine set, students will stop practicing, get frustrated, and want to either switch instruments or just quit. Please encourage the practice by listening to a new song they just learned or having mini concerts for relatives.

Please join the Sparta Music Boosters Organization and help our program by supporting the students in many ways with your talents and volunteerism.