

September 2, 2010

Dear Parents,

I want to also thank you for taking time to consider a future in music education through band for your child. The rewards of participating and contributing in a musical ensemble are many and far reaching. Your child's involvement in band will teach them social interaction, individual and team responsibility, school spirit and music appreciation as well as a skill-set that may well help them in their future education. Many musicians develop the skills necessary to secure scholarship money for college, even if they choose not to pursue music as a career.

Your child's journey starts here in beginning band. As stated before, the rewards are great, but it also requires some sacrifices. Band musicians must balance their commitment to the ensemble as equally as they do just to their other studies. It requires steady and daily practice to properly train the brain and body to work together as one. There is also a financial commitment for the rental or purchase and upkeep of a musical instrument. All of these things may present a challenge, but of course, with God ALL things are possible!

Specifically, the requirements and recommendations are these:

A musical instrument - either rented or purchased; There are many fine rental agencies and places to purchase instruments that are reputable. If your child is not sure what instrument they would want to play, don't worry – we will showcase them all and let them experiment with some. Not all musicians will, however, be able to play the instrument they want to play. This may be due to ensemble need or physical limitations of the player (e.g. a small individual with a small reach may not be able to play trombone for a while)

A method book – We will be using the “Standard of Excellence” Band Method Book #1. These are not usually available in local stores, so we will ask that you send in a check or cash for the books. The books are \$8 per child, per instrument. If you have more than one student participating, they will need a book for each child.

A year's subscription to "SmartMusic" – This is a new and extremely innovative computer program that transforms the average PC (or Mac) into your student's own private tutor! I have been using SmartMusic in my classes for over 7 years and am always amazed at the results. Aside from having over 50,000 exercises, methods, solos and piano accompaniments in its arsenal, SmartMusic also serves as a metronome (average cost \$30-75), a tuner (average cost \$35) and a private instructor (average cost \$35 per HALF HOUR!). This is all available for a **yearly** fee of \$36! The program itself is very efficient, not memory prohibitive and does not require a state of the art computer. I am convinced that this investment could mean the difference in a year's experience and a lifetime's!

Finally, a full year's commitment is required. After weighing the costs, both in finances and in time, we simply ask that your child commit to an entire year with the band. Musical instruments do not sound great overnight or with only a few minutes of practice every so often. They require extra sacrifice and patience. Those who are in this for the long haul will see the rewards, but you must be ready to sacrifice time, effort and resources.

We will be having a parent's meeting for all interested and/or ready to get started on Friday night, September 10th halftime during the football game in the band room. I look forward to seeing you there and having the opportunity to answer your questions. If you are unable to attend, please let me know of your interest and we will make sure that your child is signed up for band. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Thank you for your time.

Yours in Christ,

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