

# SOUTHEAST ELEMENTARY 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE BAND

MRS. PIATT AND MS. MCFARLAND, DIRECTORS

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## Beginning Band Frequently Asked Questions

### *Where do I get an instrument?*

Be very careful if you decide to purchase an instrument on your own. Many online instrument dealers will sell you an "instrument" that will not last through the year. While these prices might seem attractive, keep in mind you are getting what you pay for. My recommendation is that you rent or purchase a quality instrument from a music store!

### *Does the school have instruments to rent?*

Southeast has a very limited supply of instruments available to students facing economic hardships. If you have a need for one of these instruments, please contact Mrs. Piatt at [piattj@saalem.k12.oh.us](mailto:piattj@saalem.k12.oh.us). These instruments are provided on a "first come, first serve" basis.

### *What method book should I get for my student?*

If you rent an instrument online, you will have the option to purchase the correct method book. If you need to purchase one separately, you will buy: Essential Elements For Band Book One (Yellow).

### *How much time should my student spend practicing?*

The best way to ensure success on an instrument is to practice regularly! The recommendation at Southeast is to get 100 minutes per week. This should be spread over 5 days at 20 minutes each day. Students should practice at least 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week in a quiet, well-lit environment and should have a chair and music stand to encourage proper posture. During weekly sectionals, the instructors will assign exercises from the book for at-home practice. Individual practice is essential for your student to excel and for our band program to improve! Practicing regularly reinforces the classroom instruction and helps develop good fundamentals and habits.

### *Where will I store my instrument at school?*

There is no space in the music room to store instruments. Instruments should be kept in the homerooms until the designated band time, and students will be given time to return their instruments to their classroom after band. Please remember to have your **nametag** on your instrument (we are able to provide nametags at the school if your student doesn't have one)!!

### *Can my son/daughter play the drums?*

The drums are always very popular among 5th graders. In order to achieve a well-balanced band, we must limit the number of students who play the drums. We call students who play drums, percussionists, because they play mallet instruments for 50% of the time. If your student would like to be a percussionist, we will administer a coordination and note-reading test to determine placement.

### *Can my son/daughter participate in band if he/she plays sports?*

Many students are very talented in a variety of areas including sports and music. Band meets during the school day, with 3 required concerts outside of school, and should not conflict with sports rehearsals and games. Many of the Junior High and High Schools students are in band as well as on sports teams and involved in cheerleading. Being involved in a variety of activities allows students to experience different types of disciplines and aids in developing responsibility and an appreciation for many subject areas.

### *What if my child wants to switch instruments mid-year?*

We generally discourage students from switching in fifth grade. Often, the desire to switch comes from frustration on the current instrument and can usually be solved with an increase in practice time. However, there are very rare instances that a certain instrument isn't working out for a student, in which case, we will be in touch with the parents regarding a possible switch. Your students has gone through an instrument fitting process to help guide him/her toward an instrument on which we feel he/she would be successful, but it will take work!

### *It was recommended that my child play one instrument, but he or she would really like to play another one. What do we do?*

Each student needs to be excited about the instrument they choose. This is the goal when we make our recommendations. Please be aware that physical characteristics (braces or an overbite, for example) can make it difficult to produce a sound on certain instruments. We try to find the right match for each student so that he or she has the best possible opportunity for a successful and positive experience in band. However, the decision is ultimately up to you and your family.

### *When does my child need his or her instrument?*

Your student will need an instrument and book for their first lesson, which will begin the week of September 14<sup>th</sup>.