

HEMPFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT Elementary Band Program

Getting Started

Band instruction begins at the end of third grade with a demonstration of the instruments presented by your child's school band teacher. Students are encouraged to choose a band instrument based on their preference for tone quality, range of sound, and excitement of the instrument. Band teachers may also make instrument recommendations based on the physical attributes of your child and needs of the full ensemble for balanced instrumentation.

In fourth grade, students are able to choose from the following instruments: Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Baritone, and Percussion (both mallets and drums). In fifth or sixth grade, students may be invited to play the french horn or the tuba.

School Program: Grade 4

- All fourth grade band students will receive a thirty-minute group lesson once per cycle on a rotational schedule. Lessons will be held on the same day each cycle, but rotate throughout several different "blocks" from cycle to cycle. In order for students to attend their lessons, they must be doing at least 75% work or better in the content area from which they will be leaving class.

- Students will also receive a thirty-minute band rehearsal once per cycle, scheduled by the building principal or in conjunction with classroom teachers. Students who study their instruments privately may participate in the school band, and will receive occasional in-school lesson instruction on those instruments for the purposes of assessment and concert preparation.

- Students are expected to practice their instruments outside of school. Amount of practice and frequency of practice will vary by student and by assignment, but a general guideline for those who are getting started would be 15-20 minute practice sessions four to five times per week.

- Students are required to perform in three concerts during their fourth grade year: a combined demonstration concert in the fall, a concert in their own elementary schools, and a combined elementary concert in the spring. You and your child will receive specific dates for these performances at the beginning of the school year.

School Program: Grades 5 & 6

- All fifth and sixth grade band students will receive a thirty-minute group lesson once per cycle on a rotational schedule. Lessons will be held on the same day each cycle, but rotate throughout several different "blocks" from cycle to cycle. In order for students to attend their lessons, they must be doing at least 75% work or better in the content area from which they will be leaving class.

- Students will also have a thirty-minute band rehearsal once per cycle, scheduled by the building principal. Students who study their instruments privately may participate in the school band, and will receive occasional lesson instruction on those instruments for the purposes of assessment and concert preparation.

- Students are expected to practice their instruments outside of school. Amount of practice and frequency of practice will vary by student and by assignment, but a general guideline for those who are getting started would be 15-20 minute practice sessions four to five times per week.

•Students are required to perform in two concerts during the school year: a Holiday Concert in their own elementary schools and a combined elementary concert in the spring. You and your child will receive specific dates for these performances at the beginning of the school year. Please note: Student performance in concerts is subject to teacher discretion based on the “Personal Accountability” statement below. If a student demonstrates behavior that is detrimental to the others in the group, they will be unable to rehearse and perform with the ensemble.

School Instruments

- While all students are encouraged to rent an instrument, a **limited** number of district-owned instruments are available for student use.
- These instruments will be issued to students who meet the following criteria: student need, classroom teacher recommendation, music teacher recommendation, balanced instrumentation, availability of instruments.
- Students using school instruments are responsible for any repairs needed due to negligence or improper care of the instruments. Routine maintenance and normal “wear and tear” repairs will be covered by the school district.
- A nominal fee, payable each semester, will be charged to cover maintenance and repair of the instrument.
- All parents and students using school-owned instruments must review the Hempfield School District Instrumental Usage Fee Handout, as well as sign the Instrument Loan Agreement and return it to the child’s band teacher.

Elementary Band Policies

Progress Reports:

Every trimester, you will receive an electronic progress report indicating that your child is making outstanding progress, satisfactory progress, or that your child’s band teacher has concerns about your child’s progress.

Personal Accountability:

In addition to learning musical skills, your child will also develop a sense of responsibility and personal accountability. Therefore, you will be notified if your child is unprepared three times in one or more of the following ways:

- Forgets instrument
- Forgets lesson book
- Is unable to correctly perform his/her lesson assignment due to insufficient or ineffective practice
- Does not attend lesson/band at all
- Demonstrates inappropriate behavior at lessons or band rehearsal

Conditions for Removal from the Band Program

Your child may be removed from the band program if he or she meets one or both of the following conditions:

- If your child is unprepared three times within a time period designated by your child’s band instructor, you will receive an email from your child’s band instructor to discuss whether or not your child will continue to participate in the band program.
- If your child is unable to meet academic classroom requirements, classroom teachers may recommend that your child be removed from the band program due to academic difficulties.

***HELPFUL HINTS FOR SUCCESS!

- Remind your child to practice; ask your child to perform a “mini concert” for you!
- Help gather your child’s materials the NIGHT BEFORE his/her lesson•
- Ask to see your child’s band folder; check for papers that may need to be signed and/or returned.

Final Thoughts

We are excited to work with all children involved in the Hempfield Elementary Band program and look forward to continued participation throughout their academic journey! If, at any time, parents or students have questions or concerns regarding participation in the band program, band teachers are available for contact and would be happy to assist.

We look forward collaborating with students, teachers, and parents to provide a positive opportunity for musical performance and plant the seed for a life-long love of music in our students!

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