

Flossmoor School District 161



10 Things Every Beginning Band Parent Needs to Know

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1. Make sure your child brings his or her instrument and music to school for every lesson and rehearsal.

Rehearsals include ALL 5th grade band students in the district. They occur **after school every Monday** that school is in-session from September 18th – April 30th

Students are bussed from the grade schools to Parker for rehearsal from 3:00 - 4:05 p.m.

Parents must pick up students from Parker at 4:05 p.m.

Lessons are smaller groups that meet at the grade schools during the school day, every week starting September 17th. Each school has a different day of the week:

Flossmoor Hills - Mondays with Mrs. Hoefle
Western Avenue - Wednesdays with Ms. Reid (lessons start Sept. 26, 2019)
Heather Hill - Thursdays with Mrs. Hoefle
Serena Hills - Fridays with Mrs. Reid

Lesson attendance is crucial to success. Lessons are where we teach the students how to play the instruments. Rehearsal is the opportunity to play our instruments together as a band.

Students who miss lessons fall behind; students who fall behind often lose interest.

2. Make sure your child has a good quality instrument

DO NOT BUY AN INSTRUMENT ON AMAZON. You will be wasting your \$100. Used, repaired, good quality instruments are far better than cheap, new ones!! If you see a new instrument for around \$100, beware! These instruments often do not function, or only function for a short time and then cannot be fixed. Barry Sperti Woodwinds is a good source for quality clarinets and flutes (815) 806-0215.

We recommend Quinlan and Fabish because they provide quality instruments at a competitive price. If you rent-to-own, every repair will be free until you have paid off the balance and own the instrument. The Quinlan and Fabish representative comes to visit us every week, so we can provide a loaner instrument for you child, send the instrument in for repair, and get it back and returned to your child without you having to lift a finger.

If you wish to purchase your instrument elsewhere, be sure that it is of a reputable brand. **Call us if you are unsure!** Do not buy instruments from retailers that don't specialize in musical instruments.

A poor instrument in your child's hands is almost a guarantee of frustration and eventual failure. Please contact us if you are considering purchasing online or somewhere other than Quinlan and Fabish or Melody Mart.

Hand-me-down instruments are often fine, but usually need repair. Call Barry Sperti Woodwind Repairs (815) 806-0215 or Quinlan and Fabish (630) 654-4111.

The school district owns some instruments and books for use by students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. Please contact us if you qualify and are interested. We want everyone who is interested to be able to participate!

3. Purchase and replenish the other necessary supplies.

ALL STUDENTS NEED a music stand for practice at home, the required books for lessons, rehearsals, and practice, as well as black dress pants, black shoes, and a District 161 music polo for performances.

In addition, each instrument requires the following:

FLUTE

Swab - This can be a handkerchief or bandana, or one purchased from a music store. It should not have a string attached. We ask students to tie these to the handle of the instrument, not to keep it in the case.

OBOE

REEDS! – purchase reeds with red windings from Edmund Nielsen, found here:

<http://www.nielsen-woodwinds.com/c-133-oboe-reeds.aspx>

Swab – feather or silk

CLARINET

REEDS!! - These are best purchased by the box. students go through them quickly, and it is not healthy to use the same one for too long. Reeds come in strengths. Generally, 5th graders start with 2 1/2's, then move up to 3's in 6th grade. Rico Royals are inexpensive but decent for beginners. VanDorens are better quality, but more expensive. Reeds can be purchased by calling Quinlan and Fabish and ordering by phone. They are also for sale at Melody Mart in Homewood. A box of reeds usually lasts 3-4 months. Purchase a new box before your child runs out. A clarinet cannot be played without a reed.

Handkerchief Swab - with a string. Available at any music store

Reed guard - a hard plastic case for reeds currently in use.

Cork grease - looks like chapstick, but is used to make it easier to put the instrument together.

TRUMPET, HORN, BARITONE, and TUBA

Tuning Slide grease - for tuning slides. It looks like chapstick but isn't.

Valve oil - available at any music store. French horns use rotary valve oil, which is different than the type used for trumpets, baritones and tubas.

TROMBONE

Tuning Slide grease - for tuning slides. It looks like chapstick but isn't.

Slide oil - for the large trombone slide. The best kind is called Slide-O-Mix Rapid Comfort. The clear, thin type does not work well at all.

PERCUSSION - no other equipment requirements until 6th grade.

4. Make sure your child practices the correct assignment at home, and sign your child's practice journal each week.

Assignments will be marked in the practice journal inside the method book. Your child should practice each assigned exercise 10 times. On the night before the lesson, please sign the bottom of the assigned pages.

If, for scheduling reasons, your child does not have a lesson for a week, it is even more important that he or she practices at home that week. Momentum and consistency is key to a successful first year.

5. Pick your child up promptly at 4:05 p.m. on Mondays.

If you are late, it is not only your child who is waiting, but also the teacher. Failure to pick your child up on time can result in your child not being able to participate in band.

6. Consider private lessons.

A good place to call for lessons is Melody Mart in Homewood (708) 798-5500.

7. Listen to your child practice.

Many of the tunes in the Beginning Band book are ones that you know. Even if you do not know how to read music, see if you recognize them when your child plays them. Be kind and patient! With practice your child will improve! We recommend 90 minutes of practice a week, divided up into at least three sessions.

8. Check your e-mail

We will not inundate you with emails, but we do depend on email as a means of communication about behavior, schedule changes, events, etc.

9. Mark the concert dates on your calendar!

Winter – Thursday, December 11th at 6:30 p.m. in the Parker North Gym. Students arrive at 6:00 p.m. in concert attire.

Spring – Tuesday, April 16th at 6:30 p.m. in the Parker North Gym. Students arrive at 6:00 p.m. in concert attire.

10. View Beginning Band as the start of something great!

Many studies have shown the many benefits of a music education, both academically and socially. Music helps raise test scores, provides a positive social circle, and teaches teamwork. Music is a subject that can be studied right through High School and College.

Take your child to see and hear the HF High School Band and any other live music performances! Think of where your child could be in just a few years!

Congratulations on providing your child with this valuable opportunity!