**Your child was invited to be in the band, now what!?**

**Involvement/responsibilities**

Your child will perform in 2 concerts this year. A holiday concert with the entire elementary school (12/3) and also a 5-8 grade concert(4/30).

An instrument can be a costly investment. To keep that investment safe, I would encourage you to add the instrument to your insurance policy in case anything should ever happen to it. Record the brand name, model number, serial number, and merchant information and keep it on file. I would also encourage you to keep the information you receive from Tom’s Music House when you start the rental process from them.

Cases should be labeled

To help with organization in the band room, I would like all cases to have a name tag on them. To help you in case the instrument is ever forgotten or misplaced somewhere, please include a phone number and an address.

**Parental support**

I have noticed that the students who are the most successful in band are the students who have parents who become a part of their practicing schedule.

*Please* encourage your students to practice. When I ask the students to practice, they look at it as homework. However, if you ask them to practice, this tends to carry more weight. A fun way to get your student to practice is to ask them to play for you. Please give them encouraging words after they perform for you. To help them when they do practice, please provide them with a chair that they can sit up straight in, a room that has adequate light, little distraction, and a place to put their music, so they don’t have to sacrifice their posture to see the music. A folding stand is another great option that is cheap and can be stored with little space.

Students will be required to practice 1 hour every week as part of their grade in the class. Practice time may be split up over days during the week, as long as it adds to an hour. This year we will use practice logs in the band room. I will ask for a parents signature each week to prove that they practiced for the amount of time they say they have. I ask that you do encourage your student to be as honest as possible about their practicing time.

If there is ever a time that an instrument seems to be stuck or broken, please refrain from trying to fix it yourself. I would rather you bring it to me and let me try to fix it instead of attempting to fix it with tools. I have heard horror stories of student’s parents destroying their instrument by trying to fix it. If I cannot fix it I will get your contact information and send it into the repair shop where they will contact you with an estimate.

**Instrument Care**

All instruments require a few extra things to be used efficiently. Below I will list the extra things that instruments need to work well and also some brief information on keeping the instruments clean and in good working condition.

First some things for all instruments:

1. Never chew gum or eat while playing your instrument. Since you blow into an instrument to make the sound food particles/gum can go into the instrument also and make it dirty and potentially cause to stop working all together. I suggest rinsing your mouth out after eating.
2. When not playing the instrument hold onto it with both hands. Never rest an instrument on its bell. Major damage can occur and it can be costly to have it repaired.

**Flute**

1. Flute players should have a cloth that they can clean out the inside of the instrument with. New flutes should have a stick that assists with this. Some players prefer a “pad saver” which is a cloth pad that absorbs the moisture and gets it off the pads.

**Clarinet**

1. Clarinets require reeds make a sound. I would like all students to have at least **3** working reeds at all times in case one breaks. They can be purchased two ways. They can be purchased online at wwbw.com by searching “clarinet reeds”. I suggest Vandoren strength 2 ½ for beginners. Or, students may purchase reeds from me, for $2.50 a piece.
2. Between the different sections of the clarinet are corks. Sometimes the corks can make the instrument challenging to put together. Cork grease can help the sections slide easier. Students will be taught to apply cork grease during class.
3. After a student practices their clarinet, they need to swab out the instrument by pulling a cloth through it to collect the condensation. They will be taught how to do this in class.

**Saxophone**

1. Saxophones require reeds make a sound. I would like all students to have at least **3** working reeds at all times in case one breaks. They can be purchased two ways. They can be purchased online at wwbw.com by searching “saxophone reeds”. I suggest Vandoren strength 2 ½ for beginners. Or, students may purchase reeds from me, for $3.50 a piece.
2. After a student practices their saxophone, they need to swab out the instrument by pulling a cloth through it to collect the condensation. They will be taught how to do this in class.

**Trumpet**

1. Trumpets use valves to change their pitch. When the valve is dry it doesn’t move as well so there is valve oil. Students will be taught to do this in class. However, please watch them to make sure the valve never comes fully out of the instrument.
2. There are several slides on a trumpet. They should be moved frequently to prevent them from getting stuck. There is slide grease to also help prevent them from becoming frozen. Students will be taught to apply slide grease during class.
3. After a student practices, they should empty out their condensation or “spit” by pushing on a lever or button and lightly blowing.

**French Horn**

1. There are many slides on a horn. They should be removed frequently and turned upside down to make sure there is no condensation in them. Slide grease should be applied at least once a year to keep them from getting stuck.
2. After a student practices their horn, they should rotate it so that the condensation or “spit” can leave through the lead pipe (which is where they place their mouthpiece.)

**Trombone**

1. Due to the trombone being one big slide, please help your student to be cautious when moving the slide. Even a little dent can make it more difficult to move.
2. There is different slide grease for trombones than the other brass instruments. I prefer the Yamaha slide grease because I think it works the best. Students will be taught to apply slide grease during class.
3. After a student practices their trombone, they should empty out their condensation or “spit” by pushing a lever or button at the end of their slide and blowing lightly.

**Baritone**

1. Baritones use valves to change their pitch. When the valve is dry it doesn’t move as well so there is valve oil. Students will be taught to do this in class. However, please watch them to make sure the valve never comes fully out of the instrument.
2. There are several slides on a baritone. They should be moved frequently to prevent them from getting stuck. There is slide grease to also help prevent them from becoming frozen. Students will be taught how to apply slide grease during class.
3. After a student practices their instrument, they should empty out their condensation or “spit” by pushing on a lever or button and lightly blowing.