

BAND FAQs

At what grade level do band lessons start?

Band is offered starting in 4th grade.

What instruments can my child choose from?

The band instruments that are available to play in beginning band are:

- Flute
- Clarinet
- Saxophone
- Trumpet
- Trombone
- Baritone
- French Horn
- Percussion*

How does my child pick an instrument?

In the spring of 3rd grade, during in-school music classes, there will be demonstrations for each instrument, as well as lessons on how each instrument sounds and works (Quaver curriculum videos). There will also be an instrument trial available for students. We also hold a John Keal night so parents can get more information on instrument rentals.

A band permission form will go home to parents so they can let us know which instrument their student has chosen and if they want to rent, purchase or borrow an instrument.

After the first lesson, each student will get a "Welcome to Band" letter with much more information about the year ahead.

How do I obtain an instrument?

Rent from John Keal Music (highly recommended)

Visit www.johnkealmusic.com for more information on the rental process. It is recommended you complete the process the summer before 4th grade to ensure John Keal reserves the instrument for your child. A representative comes to Fort Ann once a week to assist with all instrument related issues, including pick-up and drop-off of all rented instruments. You will never have to travel to a music shop, and can order supplies and have them delivered right to our classroom. The "lease-to-own" program is a sure way to own the instrument you are renting within a few years. (*Credit card check required for all rentals.*)

Buy/own your instrument

Before you purchase a band instrument please consult with Mrs. Laurenzo. There are many instruments you can find for a cheap price, and although it sounds appealing, instrument companies like John Keal, cannot repair your instrument due to the parts for cheaper instru-

ments not being available. Cheaper instruments may also have to be replaced every few years.

If you have an instrument in your family that your child would like to use, and you are unsure of the playability, please send it into school for a checkup. If recommended, it can be sent into John Keal for a general tune up at minimum cost.

Borrow from the school

If you are unable to rent and need to borrow an instrument, please email Mrs. Laurenzo. Borrowing from school is on a first-come, first-served basis due to limited availability.

What is expected of my child if they sign up to play an instrument?

The student must remember to bring their instrument to school on their assigned lesson day (A-F days), and must take the instrument home the same day. All lessons happen during the school day, usually during down time in the classroom. The students are encouraged to practice at home at least 4 days a week for 20 minutes, and will hand in practice logs at each lesson.

What if my child does not like the instrument he/she chose?

All students are allowed to switch instruments one time between 4th and 5th grade. They must complete a full year on their first instrument, and if unhappy, may switch to another. They will be unable to switch, once lessons in their 5th grade year has started, due to lack of time for multiple lesson groups per instrument, per grade.

What happens in band after 5th grade?

Middle school band is a class! Students come for band every other day and receive half of a credit.

What if my child didn't sign up in 4th grade, but wants to sign up in 5th grade?

That's OK!!! Any student who missed or didn't want to sign up in 4th grade may do so at the beginning of 5th grade. All 5th grade beginners will be in lesson groups with 4th grade beginners, due to lack of time for multiple lesson groups, per instrument, per grade.

**There are a lot of percussion instruments! They include snare drum and bass drum, cowbell and claves, but also pitched instruments such as timpani, chimes, and xylophones. Student must complete a rhythm test with Mrs Laurenzo to be considered for percussion.*