

Beginning Band - FAQ's

Frequently Asked Questions:

Should I rent or purchase an instrument?:

To avoid such a large initial monetary investment, we recommend renting an instrument.

Advantages:

Guaranteed working condition
Proper selection of equipment and mouthpiece
Ability to return the instrument without further obligation

What if my child is chosen for an instrument but REALLY wanted to play a different one?

Remember that each of the band directors at Wester Middle School is a trained music professional interested solely in your child's success on his or her instrument. We WILL NOT set your child up for failure. While desire plays a large role on a student's willingness to work hard, practice, and learn – physical and academic characteristics MUST be taken into consideration.

May I purchase an instrument from another source?

Absolutely - HOWEVER, take into account that the different brand may be inferior in quality and can be detrimental to your student's progress. Similar to buying a used car, there are many things you will want to consider before purchasing – please see a director for help.

May I purchase a used instrument?

Yes, but be careful of the same problems mentioned above (another source section). We strongly encourage you to stick with the brand and model recommendations made by the band directors AND to consult a director BEFORE purchasing the used instrument. If you still choose to purchase from another source or to purchase a used instrument, your student will still need to have the necessary listed accessories (book, etc.)

What happens next?

Students will have the opportunity to come to Wester Middle School and go through the instrument selection process. A Band Director will interview the child, try out different instruments on the child, and counsel them in the instrument that would be the best fit for them.

How was my child chosen for this instrument?

Instrument selection is based on a series of criteria so to best fit students with instruments in which they will be most successful. These criteria include (but not limited to): facial characteristics (lip, teeth, and jaw structure), body characteristics (arm length, frame size, hand/finger size), score on a standardized musical aptitude test, participation in piano lessons, participation in musical groups in elementary school (honor choirs, etc.), citizenship, academic performance, enrollment limitations within each section, and a quick interview with the directors.

Should my child take private lessons?

ABSOLUTELY!

Private lessons are the best way to increase your child's chances for success. It means they will meet once a week with a professional player of their instrument for some one-on-one instruction time. We even encourage your student to start private lessons in the summer so as to get a good time slot with a private teacher and to get a good fundamental start for the Fall.

** Private lesson times filled completely up last year and a lot of students were left on a waiting list. You can avoid the waiting list by signing up for lessons now. Fill out the attached interest form and a private instructor will be in contact with you.

We will begin from scratch – no prior musical knowledge is required!