

Owosso Public Schools Beginning Band

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I attend band class?

ALL band students will have an online band lesson and/or assignment at least once every week in Google Classroom. Our 5th grade band Google Classroom code is pgw5jyg. In these lessons, students will learn about note reading, rhythmic studies, how to make the correct sound on their instrument, how to play songs from their book, etc.

When do we start?

Incoming fifth graders will start with an introduction to band at the beginning of the school year in Google Classroom. Students will explore instruments via video. They will then complete the online Band Placement Tool and Instrument Preference Form to determine the best instrument-fit for them.

What if my child wants to play something other than what was recommended?

All students will be given one of their top three instrument choices. Instruments are recommended based on student interest, student performance on the Band Placement Tool, and creating a balanced band with the appropriate number of players on each instrument. The directors strong recommendation is to advise students to give their recommended instrument a chance through their 5th grade year.

How do I obtain an instrument for my child?

Please wait until your student receives their instrument recommendation and supply list.

Next, you will need to decide if you would rather rent or purchase an instrument. There are pros and cons to both options, however, renting will ensure that the instrument can be repaired for free while still under warranty. This is especially helpful while students are still adjusting to their instrument and learning to take care of a fragile item.

***ANY INSTRUMENT RENTED/PURCHASED/USED MUST BE THE NATURAL COLOR OF THAT INSTRUMENT!* (Flute - Silver, Clarinet - Black, Saxophone - Gold, Trumpet/Cornet - Gold OR Silver, Trombone - Gold)**

The best source to obtain an instrument is a music store. Most Owosso Band students get their instrument through Marshall Music. We recommend that you rent/purchase an instrument from a full-service music store, such as Marshall Music, that will stand behind instrument warranties and properly service your instrument when repairs are necessary. Please avoid purchasing an instrument from "Big Box Stores" (a place where you might buy a variety of home good and/or groceries) or any questionable merchants, especially online. These instruments are of inferior quality and do not hold up. Many music stores will refuse repairs on these instruments as the repair will not hold. If you purchase an instrument from a friend or private party, you will need to get the instrument checked over at a music store before purchasing that used instrument.

What about the cost?

The only cost of participating in band is renting/purchasing the equipment. Please contact a band director if the cost of an instrument is prohibitive of your student's participation in band, and we will attempt to offer assistance in various ways.

Are there any other required accessories beyond the instrument?

Yes. Each student will need to purchase a copy of "ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS 2000" for their selected instrument. The purchase of the book also grants students access to the Essential Elements Interactive website. This website includes supplemental resources, play along tracks and additional video lessons on each instrument. It is a wonderful resource that will be used EXTENSIVELY by your student. Each instrument has a few specific items that are necessary. Please do not purchase equipment until AFTER you have completed the Band Placement Tool, the Instrument Preference Form AND have received your instrument recommendation from an Owosso band director.

Percussion

Percussion is always a popular choice in band, so students (and parents!) should be ready to accept that only a limited number of students are selected to play percussion. Selection is based on student interest and student scores in the Rhythm Challenge and Listening Quiz in the online Band Placement Tool. Piano lessons are not required for percussionists, but it will be an added benefit to the ease of learning percussion. There is limited availability for percussionists, and students should not play percussion if they did not receive a high evaluation score. Fifth grade percussionists will learn mallet instruments (bells) and the snare drum.

What events occur outside the school day?

The only events which occur outside the school day are concerts. Usually, there is one 5th grade band concert after school and one 5th grade parade during school. However, due to the unique circumstances this year, we do not know if any of the traditional performance formats will be possible. We are working on creative and safe solutions to this unique situation and will keep you posted as we know more.

What are my options if my student is enrolled in virtual learning for the fall 2020?

All band lessons will be provided through Google Classroom. Both in person and digital learners will receive the same lesson at the same time delivered in the same way.

Will band interfere with my child's grades in other school subjects?

No. It has been found that throughout the country students participating in school instrumental music programs generally achieve higher grades in other subjects. Students at Owosso that are not in band will be doing supplemental educational activities, but band students will not be "missing out".

What are the expectations of the Owosso Band program?

- Always do your personal best!
- Practice faithfully! (15 minutes, four times per week)
- Accept responsibility for finding time to practice on a daily basis
- Have the correct materials (instrument, pencil, lesson book)
- Watch and participate in all band lessons on Google Classroom

What is my role as a parent to help my child succeed in band?**AT HOME**

- Show an interest in the musical study of your child
- Require your child to practice regularly (At least 15 minutes, four times per week)
- Find a quiet place for your child to practice without interruptions
- Find a safe place to keep his or her instrument
- Make sure your child's name tag is on his or her case at all times for identification
- Provide a good-quality instrument that is in good repair
- Help your child be responsible for their music education by completing all lessons and/or assignments in Google Classroom
- Never make fun of strange sounds made in the beginning
- Encourage your child to play for you and others

Will music narrow my child's interests?

No. Students who participate in music usually have a much greater range of interests in scholastic, athletic, and social activities than students who do not participate in co-curricular activities such as Band. Future employers and colleges tend to look more favorably toward students who are involved in various school activities, and particularly music!

What opportunities are available for my child in the Owosso Band Program?

There are several bands, grades 5 through 12, that are available for your child. There are concert bands at every level and jazz band from grades 7 through 12. Your child can participate in solo/ensemble festivals, individualized lessons, public performances, honor bands, marching band festivals, concert band festivals, pep bands and high school All-State auditions.

What benefits will my child receive by participating in the band program?

Any child who is willing to work hard and try their best can succeed in band! The following are some of the benefits that your child will likely achieve through participation: self-discipline, responsibility, music reading skills, higher-order thinking skills, hand-eye coordination, hands-on appreciation of music, thinking skills, teamwork, problem solving, perseverance, organizational skills, and a high level of focus and concentration skills. Recent research has indicated that students involved in music even achieve higher SAT test scores!

Will music training be of lasting value for my child?

Most assuredly so! Research indicates that learning music emphasizes thinking in space and time. For example, when children learn rhythms, they are learning math skills such as ratios, fractions and proportions. Even after the child gets out of school, he or she can derive satisfaction from music throughout their life as an active participant or as a consumer. A child's musical training is never lost or wasted!

What are other reasons my child should join the band?

- It's a great way to meet and make new friends, particularly as they enter a new school with new peers!
- Current research shows that playing an instrument increases brain development - and along with developing responsibility, mental discipline, teamwork and self-esteem - will provide enjoyment while fostering a lifelong appreciation of music and other arts.
- In addition to having a large *quantity* of students in the Owosso Public Schools, we also have a very high-*quality* program!
- Playing an instrument and being in Band is just plain FUN!!!
- **In today's world, your child needs something new, fun, and challenging. Your child needs to be part of a team with a common goal, with the opportunity to build a strong relationship with a caring adult. Your child needs a way to express their emotions that they may not be able to put into words. Your child needs BAND!**