

Intermediate and Advanced Band Information for Parents and Students

Concerts: Our two night concerts for the year are scheduled. These are like the final exam for band class and participation is required. If there is a conflict, I need to know one month in advance. Band is like a team sport and every player is essential to our success. Students should be from 15 to 30 minutes early to warm up and tune and should dress up. Concerts start on time and last around an hour.

Dec. 5 All Bands in the gym at 7:00 (students come 15 min. early)

May 24th: Beginning and Intermediate Bands 7:00

May 31: Advanced Band 7:00

Beware of inexpensive instruments; sadly these instruments are usually not bargains. In many cases, the instruments are of poor quality and the parts cannot be replaced. Local music stores will often not be able to repair them. Students with poor quality instruments tend to do poorly in band and get frustrated because they don't sound as good as the other students which makes them want to drop out. The bitterness caused by poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price. Pacific Winds offers free evaluations on any new or used instruments. I recommend an evaluation prior to any purchase. Please feel free to ask me about instruments you may wish to purchase.

1. **Instrument care:** review the first few pages of the band book Standard of Excellence with your students and remind them to clean and care for their instruments daily. Instruments are fragile and extremely expensive to repair. Students will be responsible to pay for any repairs needed.

2. Home Practice (25%of the band grade)

- a) Its best to establish a practice time and place that is consistent each day.
- b) Always make sure students practice with their CD's. (CD's come with their Standard of Excellence Book .) The CD's show good tone, rhythm, note length and pitch, and are fun to play with. Students should listen, model and match pitch.
- c) Remind students to stay focused and use their time wisely; play correct notes and rhythms and always use good tone and good posture (sit up straight, feet on floor, back away from chair etc.)
- d) Parent signed practice cards will be required each Mon. 10 minutes a day is an 'A'. Late cards will receive lower grades.
- d) Always encourage your kids: learning a new instrument is hard!

3. **Private lessons** are the best way to ensure success and keep your kids motivated. They are not required but highly recommended. (There are a few instruments like oboe, bassoon and french horn that take extra teaching so if your child chooses one of these instruments, they really need to take private lessons or they will likely be frustrated. I teach bassoon and am happy to do it for no charge before or after school.) Call Pacific Winds 343-5660 or myself for names and numbers of private teachers.

4. **Students will be graded** on behavior and participation(BP Points) (50%), practice cards (25%) and quizzes, playing tests and returning parent signed info sheets(25%). BP points are given for effort, respect, good attitudes, following rules, being prepared and listening. Practice cards need to be signed by a parent and are due at the beginning of each week. The best way to ensure success is daily practice. Grade sheets will come out every two or three weeks. Students receive points for bringing the grade sheets back with parent

signatures.

4. Pacific Winds has fun solo books that you may want to purchase. Books like “Disney Favorites” or “Patriotic Songs” can be excellent motivators once kids master the basics.
5. The Greek philosopher Plato once said that “music is a more potent instrument than any other for education.” Music, it has been shown, trains the brain for higher forms of thinking. It has been scientifically proven that students involved in music in school have higher grade point averages, score an average of 20- 40 points higher on SAT tests (verbal and math), and are generally higher academic achievers than those students who don’t participate in music classes. So encourage your students to stay in band: the benefits are enormous.

6. Extra Help and After School Practice: I am available to help students individually after school or students can just hang out in the band room and play music with their friends or practice on their own. This practice time does count on practice cards as long as the time is used well.

Thanks for supporting your kids musically. Always feel free to E-mail: **decker@4j.lane.edu** or call me with questions or concerns. I like to communicate as much as possible via e-mail so if you have an address, please write it below. I like to know how you and your students are feeling about band.

Parent involvement is very welcome and often makes a big difference in a student’s success. Please call or E-mail me any time you want more information about your student’s participation in band. I appreciate and value your interest and will enjoy working with you to make this a successful year.

Charlene Decker