

# Oak Ridge Middle School Sixth Grade Band Information 2013 - 2014



## **Packet Includes:**

*Parent Information*

*Instrument Information*

*Dates to Remember*

*Instrument Choice Form to Return to School*

**Oak Ridge Middle School Bands  
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# Welcome to the Oakridge Middle School Band Family!



Congratulations! By choosing to be a part of the OMS School Band Program, your family is about to begin a great musical adventure! Playing a musical instrument is a gift that will enrich your child's life forever, and I am very excited that you have chosen to be a part of our band next year at Oakridge Middle. This packet of information will help you begin this process.

Enclosed in this packet you will find several important pieces of information. Perhaps the most important is the instrument choice form on the last page. Please indicate your child's first, second and third choice beside the name of those instruments. ***Because bands must have a balanced instrumentation, we will limit the number of saxophones that we start. Students will have the opportunity to audition for percussion at the end of the first 9 weeks (October 2013) but all students will begin on a wind instrument. So if that instrument is your first choice, please make sure your child has a second or third choice that they could love just as much!***

Your child will take a music survey the first week of school next year to see how well they hear pitch, melody and rhythm. They will also be screened to see which instrument best suits their particular needs. Using mouthpieces and other evaluation tools, we will be able to match each child with a choice that matches their particular physical needs and musical tendencies. No student needs any prior musical experience in order to study an instrument, and we have found that in selecting a band instrument, playing another instrument is helpful, but not always a guarantee that you will get your first choice. We will work together to make sure your family has the best choice for your student!

After the screening, you will be given written notification as to which instrument fits your child best. In August, we will have a parents meeting with Pecknel Music to answer questions and provide rental information. There is no need to purchase anything at this time! We ask that students NOT try to assemble their instruments and play until we begin instruction this fall! Students can not only develop very bad playing habits that are difficult to break, but they can cause you very expensive repairs to the instruments through incorrect assembly!

Again, we are so pleased you have decided to be a part of our program. I am looking forward to meeting each of you this fall. Welcome to the Oakridge Bands!

**Please remember to complete the last sheet of this packet and return it to school by May 28, 2013!**

## Oakridge Middle 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Information on instrument brands

Purchasing an instrument is extremely important to the success of a child. Price should be considered as only one element in the equation. Most times the least expensive instrument is not the most cost effective. I strongly recommend buying or renting a first line US or Japanese made instrument.

Most music stores have great rental programs for beginner instruments. Included in those agreements are also insurance and maintenance agreements. These instruments are also brand new and come with a complete warranty from the manufacturer. Pecknel Music Company has a contract with Clover School District and has served us very well for the last 30 plus years. Their representative visits our school each week and can service your account without you having to travel. He can fix most instruments on the spot and will take the others to the repair shop for you. This is a great situation for busy families.

Of course, you may purchase your instrument where ever you choose, but there are some things to remember as you shop.

### **Pawn Shops, Internet auction sites...**

Pawn shops do not repair instruments before they sell them. I have had students purchase an inexpensive horn at a pawn shops and then have to spend hundreds of dollars to get them in playing condition. Internet auction sites are not a good option for the same reason. You have no guarantee of the instrument's condition and many times they do not come with a case. Also, most sellers expect too high a price for an instrument. Student instruments do not hold their value as well as professional horns, and they overbid. It is particularly risky to purchase flutes, saxophones or clarinets from these sources. If you have a used instrument, please bring it by school and I will be happy to check it out and make sure you are getting the best deal for your money.

**Department store catalogs, big retail stores, wholesale clubs...**

Some of these stores sell brand new instruments at a very reasonable price, but Buyers beware! These instruments are usually made in third world countries and are not made to last. They are often difficult to play and fall apart very easily. If you have to replace them, you have not saved money. Most reputable instrument companies will not repair these horns because they cannot get replacement parts from their manufacturers. Parts are often slightly different in size and shape, so standard pads, joints, springs, etc. cannot be used. These instruments are also frequently not tuned to standard pitch and students have a very difficult time trying to make them match the other sounds in the room. Students struggle and often quit because they feel they are not successful, when they are actually just struggling with their instrument.

**Colors...**

Please do not purchase odd color instruments such as blue, red, etc. The sound is usually distorted and is very difficult to play in tune.

**Remember! A real musical instrument is a delicate piece of machinery and is priced as such!**

**Some Acceptable Brands include:**

Flute	Gemeinhardt, Armstrong, Yamaha, Jupiter
Clarinet	Leblanc, Buffet, Yamaha, Accent
Alto Saxophone	Yamaha, Jupiter, Accent
Trumpet	Yamaha, Bach, King, Blessing, Accent
Trombone	Yamaha, Conn, King

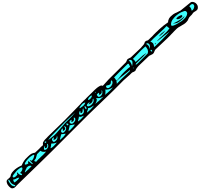
If you have any questions, please ask!

**Important Dates:**

Fall Parent Meeting: August 26, 2013 at Oak Ridge Middle School  
5:00 PM till 7:00 PM (school cafeteria)

## What should I choose?

Here are some brief descriptions of the beginning band instruments to help you make your choice!



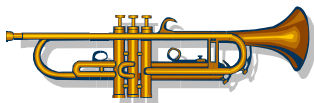
**Flute** The flute is the highest of the woodwind instruments and is the only woodwind you blow across instead of into a mouthpiece. It is very closely related to the recorder.



**Clarinet** The clarinet is the foundational woodwind instrument and you can't have too many of them in a band! They make sound by blowing across a reed on the mouthpiece. Clarinets are closely related to the saxophone family and clarinet players transition very easily to saxophone.



**Alto Saxophone** The saxophone also has a reed on the mouthpiece to produce sound. There are actually 8 saxophones in the sax family, all using the same set of fingerings. The Alto saxophone is the most common, and is the first one we learn. These instruments will be limited to no more than 8 players.



**Trumpet** The trumpet is the highest of the brass instruments. Students learn to make sound by learning to control how they use air and create a "Buzz" with their lips. Once they master that technique, they can play any of the brass instruments!



**Trombone** The trombone is one of the most important brass instruments. It is played like the trumpet, but uses a slide instead of valves to change pitches. This instrument can do things that no other instrument can do and is VERY important in Jazz and popular music styles.

### ***Why Study Music? Did you know...***

In music, a mistake is a mistake; the instrument is in tune or not, the notes are well played or not, the entrance is made or not. It is only by much hard work that a successful performance is possible. Through music study, students learn the value of sustained effort to achieve excellence and the concrete rewards of hard work.

College admissions officers continue to cite participation in music as an important factor in making admissions decisions. They claim that music participation demonstrates time management, creativity, expression, and open-mindedness.

- Carl Hartman, "Arts May Improve Students' Grades," The Associated Press, October, 1999.

Music students out-perform non-music on achievement tests in reading and math. Skills such as reading, anticipating, memory, listening, forecasting, recall, and concentration are developed in musical performance, and these skills are valuable to students in math, reading, and science.

- B. Friedman, "An Evaluation of the Achievement in Reading and Arithmetic of Pupils in Elementary School Instrumental Music Classes," *Dissertation Abstracts International*.

*Please return this form to school by May 28, 2013. This sheet will be used for the screening. Teachers, please place these sheets in the main office and Mr. Reese will pick them up by May 31. Thank you!*

Print Student First and Last Name

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Homeroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument choice \_\_\_\_\_ Flute  
\_\_\_\_\_ Clarinet  
\_\_\_\_\_ Alto Saxophone  
\_\_\_\_\_ Trumpet  
\_\_\_\_\_ Trombone  
\_\_\_\_\_ Percussion

Comments or notes to Mr. Reese

Print Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Print Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please Clearly print a parent email address \_\_\_\_\_



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