



June 2019

Dear Families of Whitnall Beginning Band & Orchestra Students,

Next school year, your student will have the opportunity to begin learning how to play an instrument in **band or orchestra** in the Whitnall School District.

The information below is provided to assist you and your student as you begin preparing for the moment when instruction begins.

- **Step 1: Sign-up for an Instrument Fitting Appointment**

- An instrument fitting is an opportunity for your child to try several instruments to see what they would be most successful with. For example, sometimes kids can't buzz on a trumpet mouthpiece, but can make a great sound on the clarinet. We want to help your child get off to a great start!
- We would like a parent/guardian to be present during the instrument fitting. We feel it is important for parents to be part of the process all along the way.
- Fittings will be on Tuesday, August 20th and Wednesday, August 21st in the Whitnall Middle School Cafeteria and will be 30 minutes in length.
- Families can sign up for their 30 minute appointment here:
<https://bit.ly/2WKQxll>



- **Step 2: Instrument Demonstrations**

- When you arrive at the instrument fitting, you will begin by watching an instrument demonstration. All band and orchestra instruments will be demonstrated so that the student has a good idea of what each one sounds like.
- Students will select the three instruments that they enjoyed hearing and would like to try.

- **Step 3: Instrument Fittings**

- Students will have the chance to try up to three instruments with a music educator.
- The music educator will make a recommendation of the best instrument "fit" for each student, then students and parents will make the final selection.
- Fittings will take place in the Whitnall Middle School Cafeteria.
 - Tuesday, August 20, 9am-1pm and 2pm-7pm
 - Wednesday, August 21, 9am-1pm and 2pm-7pm
- Families can sign up for their 30 minute appointment here:
<https://bit.ly/2WKQxll>

- **Step 4: Instrument Rental & Other Supplies**

- Music Stores will be available during the Instrument Fittings. Families can find out more information and sign up to rent their instrument through the music store. We highly recommend renting an instrument from a music store.
- Instruments that are rented through the music store: flute, oboe, clarinet, alto sax, tenor sax, trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium/baritone, percussion kit, violin, viola
- Instruments that are rented through the Whitnall School District: bassoon, tuba, cello, string bass
- Please also see the attached supply list needed for each instrument.
- After you sign up to rent an instrument through the music store, the store will bring it to the school for the first day of band or orchestra class.
- We would highly recommend purchasing an instrument from a local Music Store. Be VERY careful about buying an instrument online, at a pawn shop, garage sale, or department store. These instruments more often than not are of poor quality or in very poor condition and cannot be repaired. Over the years, we have seen many new instruments purchased online that have been unplayable upon delivery (missing parts, wrong size, none of the parts soldered together, keys don't shut all the way, etc). In addition, please do not purchase a plastic instrument. Repair shops will not fix them if they break and they do not produce a great tone quality that is essential for the success of any student.

Please know that in order for students to find true success in the band and orchestra, balanced instrumentation is important. A band cannot have 30 percussionists and an orchestra cannot have 30 basses. We are working for success for all students and will therefore work to recommend an instrument that is not only going to be successful for the student, but also will help the band or orchestra be successful as a group. That being said, if percussion was not recommended for your child, please consider another instrument. Percussion students must be committed to learning both bells and snare drum and they will gradually learn several other percussion instruments as they get older.

We look forward to your student's participation in instrumental music and look forward to seeing you at the Instrument Fittings in August.

If you have any questions before that time, please feel free to contact any music educator.

Sincerely,

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