

Magnolia Intermediate Band



Dear Families,

As a sixth grader, your student has the opportunity to do what so many successful students have done before them - **BE PART OF THE BAND!** *Anyone can join and no previous band or music reading experience is needed.* When you are talking with your student and counselors about next year's elective choices, I invite you to strongly consider making band your first choice.

This may be your first exposure to music education, or you may have had students in our band program previously, but I wanted to take a brief moment to share some information with you. Most everyone enjoys music through some media, be it television, radio, movies, or concerts. Central to the appreciation and understanding of music is performance. There is a genuine exhilaration in making music, in playing a beautiful concert, performing a thrilling half-time show, or marching a parade. Being in band is FUN!

Music education is more than just playing an instrument; it is immersing your student in a culture of success with a teacher who cares about their education and has a passion for music. It challenges each student to use the creative side of his/her brain while, at the same time, multitasking and learning something new...MUSIC. History shows us the kind of character development band can provide. Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon, was a euphonium player. President Reagan was the Drum Major of his high school band, and President Clinton, a saxophone player, was a member of the Arkansas All-State Band for three years. Jason Kelce, Philadelphia Eagles center, recently said "I consider a lot of my growth as a player and as a person happened learning saxophone. Being coached by conductors and teachers, reading sheet music and understanding how to practice by repeating the same thing over and over again and you see how much easier the song becomes...If you want to see how very cut-and-dry, how practice can cause you to improve, play an instrument."

All of the current data clearly states that students involved in music education academically outperform their non-musical peers. Even more importantly, studies are showing that music students are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. Music training not only helps children develop fine motor skills and coordination, but aids emotional and behavioral maturation as well; we teach life lessons. Through band, students develop a sense of teamwork, improve their self-confidence and motivation, gain a feeling of success, improve their discipline, develop leadership skills, learn that hard work and practice pays off, AND it just happens to be fun. Band gives students many opportunities they might never have otherwise.

Every destination starts with a decision to embark on a journey. Now is the time to start your student on a musical journey, and being part of the Magnolia Intermediate 6th Grade Band is the place to do it. We can't promise that every student will be a musical prodigy, but we can promise they will learn, laugh, and grow along the way. Don't put off a year of instruction - start them in band from the very beginning!

Students choosing to be part of the band will have many performance opportunities including concerts, competitions, honor band festivals, pep rallies, football games, spring trips, and more. Please read our frequently asked questions sheet found on the back. Should you have any additional questions about band or student's participation in it, contact me using the information listed below. You may also check out our recruitment website at <https://tinyurl.com/MISBand1>. We invite you to take advantage of all the opportunities for growth the band has to offer. We hope your student will join us and reap the benefits to **be part of something great and be a part of the band!**

Sincerely,
Justin Hike, Director
Magnolia Intermediate School
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What if I am not sure I want my student to do band?

Remember when your children wouldn't eat the food you made for them? You always said, "Try it before you decide you don't like it." Band is the same way. Your student should sign up for band even if you or your student is unsure - but please remember to give it time; band is not an "immediate gratification" organization. However, it gets better with time each year and it is easier to start an instrument now instead of joining late.

What if my student or I don't know anything about music?

That's ok! I will teach your student everything he/she needs to know, step by step - from what instrument to play, how to assemble and care for the instrument, to reading notes and rhythms. I will guide you and your student through the process. All that is needed from you is an enthusiastic attitude as well as understanding and patient ears when your student comes home and makes his/her first sounds.

What if my student has never played an instrument - what should they play?

Don't worry. It is not necessary they have any experience prior to joining the MIS 6th Grade Band. On March 8th, we will be holding an Instrument Selection Tryout for ALL 5th grade students during PE. We will guide your student based on his/her musical interests, physical make-up, and instrument availability. Your student knows what he/she wants, you know your student, and I know music. Together, with the help of the MJH and MWHS band staff, we will find the instrument that he/she will not only enjoy but will be best suited for and give him/her the best chance for immediate musical success.

Please DO NOT purchase or lease an instrument until AFTER your student has been through the tryout process and you have been notified what instrument they will be playing. We will send information home with your student if they sign up for band about what instrument they will play and when you can start getting materials. We will have an instrument drive at the end of the school year or beginning of next school year and invite local music stores to help you with securing an instrument and all other necessary items to care for it. It is very important that you do not purchase an instrument without our information, as many instruments are poorly made and not repairable.

What are the costs? Do I have to buy an instrument?

The costs associated with band depend on which instrument your student chooses. The school will have certain larger, more select, and more expensive instruments available for use to rent. Smaller, less expensive instruments can be rented or purchased from a local music store at a reasonable price. We will have a few local music stores at our Instrument Drive night, and they will be able to answer questions and help you obtain your materials. Their job is to work with you to make something fit in the budget, they will appreciate your business. If financial constraints prevent your student from being able to join band, please contact me; I will do my best to not let instrument availability or financial constraints keep your student from participating.

How much out of school time is required?

Band is no different than any other subject. I ask that your student spend time practicing every day outside of class. Think of it as homework but much more fun. Sixth grade will have two or three concerts during the school year, but dates will be given to you months in advance.

Can my student do sports or other extra-curricular activities while in band?

YES!!! In fact, a number of band students are involved in other school activities, including intramural sports, dance, science club, etc. Studies show that students involved in band programs are leaders in other areas of school as well.