

*Music Department*  
**Somers Intermediate School**  
Somers, NY 10589  
**Somers.Intermediate.School.Band@gmail.com**

## 2023-24 Band Enrollment Information

Dear Parent,

At the close of our school year, your child attended a brief assembly detailing our band instruction program and the instruments we offer to fourth grade students. All students are invited to begin study on one of the following instruments:

**\*Important note for students currently enrolled in the strings program. If you wish to switch programs, please make sure to confer with the director of the strings program.**

Flute  
Clarinet  
Alto Saxophone (limited enrollment)  
Trumpet  
French Horn  
Trombone  
Euphonium  
Mallet Percussion (limited enrollment, drum instruction begins after students study keyboard percussion)

Students in our program receive one instrument class per week during the school day. We offer these classes on a rotating schedule; students leave their classrooms at a different time each week in order to minimize disruption of their other classes. We are fortunate to have a differentiated instruction period for each classroom, when new curricular material is not introduced, and many of your child's classes will take place during this period. Students also attend a weekly band rehearsal, and they perform at the end of the year during our annual fourth grade band night. Attendance at this performance is mandatory, and the date will appear on our district calendar.

During our assembly, we emphasized the high expectations we have of students enrolled in the program. While playing in a band is fun, we work in a classroom setting. We expect the students to practice at least 80 minutes each week, and record their practice in a journal contained within their method books. We also expect band members to maintain their classwork in their regularly scheduled subjects, particularly when they miss a class period to attend band.

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide an instrument and purchase a method book for our instrument classes. Most parents choose a rental program, so that their children can have a quality instrument on a trial basis. There are two excellent companies that deliver and pick up instruments through the school, and we have order forms for your convenience. Most local music stores offer rental programs as well, but we urge you to inspect the instrument prior to renting it, as there are a number of poorly maintained instruments in circulation. If you'll permit one more bit of advice: in a number of retail stores and discount clubs, as well as on eBay, new instruments are being offered at the cost of many rentals, for a 'too good to be true' price. We cannot recommend these instruments with any confidence. Parts are not readily available to repair them. One of the biggest contributors to a student quitting is an instrument in poor playing condition; when it sounds bad, the student doesn't know the instrument is not working, and assumes it's his/her fault.

Students are invited to enroll on the instrument of their choice, but please note the following:

**Those students who enroll in percussion instruction begin with mallet instruction. Typically, students do not begin snare drum study until February of their first year. In the Middle and high School bands, percussion students are expected to play mallet instruments, as well as the snare drum, timpani, and other percussion instruments. Percussionists must obtain a 2-½-octave bell kit for their instruction. In this particular case, the purchase is very close to the rental cost.**

**Before choosing the saxophone, please have your child see one of the band directors. We'll put a sax in his/her hands, as their fingers need to be able to reach around the instrument without contacting the side keys. If their heart is set on the sax, they can study the first year on flute or clarinet for an easy migration the following year.**

**Highest enrollment is usually in the flute, clarinet and saxophone sections. If students are looking for smaller group instruction (and more solo opportunities in later years!), consider the brass instruments. We always want more horns, trombones and euphoniums, in particular.**

**Please do not rent an instrument until official confirmation is sent via e-mail. If you rent an instrument that is not approved, you will be asked to swap the instrument for the approved choice!**

Our district has exceptional band programs at the middle and high school levels, and the fourth grade is a great time for students to take advantage of the many benefits of music instruction. We hope to work with many of your children! Should you have any questions about the program, please contact us through our band enrollment email addresses.

Sincerely,

Ricky Myint

**Somers.Intermediate.School.Band@gmail.com**

# **What You'll Need to Obtain for Band Instruction in the Fourth Grade**

## **Instrument, in good playing condition**

Please do not obtain an instrument until your enrollment is confirmed. A rental instrument from a reputable company will play well. If you obtain a second-hand instrument, chances are that it will require maintenance or repair. Please bring it to a music store in order to put it in playing condition. **New instruments sold at an unbelievably low price are almost always more trouble than they are worth.**

## **Method Book, Standard of Excellence, Book I**

Please obtain the book when you rent/purchase the instrument. It is available wherever instruments are sold or rented.

## **For Percussion Students**

Please do not obtain this material until your enrollment is confirmed.

2.5 octave bell kit  
flat practice pad  
2b or similar snare drum sticks

## **For Clarinet or Saxophone students**

You will need an extra supply of reeds. They break easily in the beginning, and they wear out under normal playing. I recommend a box of 10 or 25 to start, and size #2 is fine.

Please visit the following address to continue with the enrollment process.  
Please copy and paste the link into the address window on your browser.

<https://forms.gle/uKmwCJEGnW9zfnpJ8>

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