

JHES Band FAQs:

Does band last all year?

Yes. When your child enrolls in band, they are making a commitment to play that instrument for the entire school year.

Is concert attendance required?

Concert attendance is mandatory! The success of our ensemble depends on each musician's participation. As we get into concert music, each instrument will have independent parts that affect the whole group. Therefore, everyone matters! Please mark our winter and spring concert dates down on your home calendar as soon as they are announced and make them a priority.

What are my child's expectations at lessons?

To be successful in band, all musicians are encouraged to follow these guidelines:

- Bring your instrument, book, folder, & pencil to EVERY lesson
- Take your instrument, book & folder home every day. Never leave it at school!
- Practice at least five days per week, 20 minutes a day.
- Always try your best!

How does the Band pullout schedule work? Will the schedule ever change?

Your 4th grader will have two 30-minute lessons each week with their small instrument group. As the concerts approach, one lesson will be replaced with a large group rehearsal. Your 5th grader (second year students) will have 1 30-minute lesson with their small instrument group and 1 lesson with the whole 5th grade band. 5th grade beginners will start with one 30-minute lesson week until they are ready to join a second year group. So they are not missing the same class time each week, we have a rotating schedule. Your child will receive a monthly lesson schedule to keep in their band folder and a copy to post at home.

Occasionally, the schedule will need to be altered for special days (i.e. half days, assemblies, testing, etc).

Does my child need to practice at home?

Since instrumental music meets only twice a week, home practicing is essential! By playing more days each week, they will build mouth and finger muscle memory more quickly and retain what they are learning in lessons. By playing each song assigned 3 times, this can easily be accomplished!

Should my child continue the same instrument every year?

I HIGHLY RECOMMEND that all 5th graders continue on their instrument from last year. By continuing on that instrument, they will be in their advanced ensemble and playing with their peers. Switching instruments means going back to the beginning ensemble and potentially performing with the younger grades. It also means they will need to meet individually with me and therefore may not get to practice right away with their classmates.

If your child did not like last year's instrument and really wants to switch, please contact me (either by phone or email) to let me know before enrolling in band. In this case, it would be beneficial to sign your child up for private lessons on that new instrument to help your child progress more quickly so they can rejoin their classmates.

Do I need to supply my child's instrument and book?

It is the family's responsibility to obtain their child's instrument and book. There is a list of materials on the online registration form.

How much does an instrument cost? Should I rent or buy?

Every music store in the area has individual rental policies and costs. You will need to contact these stores to find out the costs for renting or purchasing an instrument. I recommend that most students begin by renting. That way, if they change their mind the following year, you haven't purchased it outright. Plus, most stores have a rent-to-own program, so your rental cost is going towards the final purchase price. Finally, most rentals will provide a loaner instrument if yours needs to go into the shop.

If you decide to purchase an instrument, please avoid "warehouse-type" stores. While their instruments may be cheaper, they are not of the quality needed for your child to be successful and will likely cause your child undue frustration. Not only will they not sound as nice as a more reputable brand, they often require more repairs during the year. Music stores do not carry replacement parts for those instruments and will not repair them.

Some families have had success finding used instruments on Amazon and Craigslist. If you go this route, make sure you choose a reputable brand and model (see supply list) and send me the link to look it over.

Where should I get an instrument?

Please see the "resources" tab for a list of local music stores.

What supplies does my child need to play in band?

Please see the online registration form for a list of materials needed for each particular instrument.

How can I help my child succeed in band?

Family involvement and encouragement is crucial to the success of your budding musician! There will be times when your child may become frustrated and not want to practice. As the saying goes "Practice makes perfect!" If they put the work in at home, I promise they will be successful. Please encourage your musician with these suggestions...

- Help them find a quiet place to practice at home
- Display their schedule somewhere at home so everyone can stay organized
- Remind them to bring their instrument & folder on lesson days
- Use gentle and positive encouragement and never use practice as a punishment!
- Visit the band webpage often for updates & announcements
- Call, email, or write a note with any questions or concerns
- Consider getting private lessons for your musician
- Make concert attendance a priority for the whole family

How do my musician and I care for the instrument?

Keep in a safe place at home. Never leave your instrument in the car overnight!

Always put the instrument back in the case when not being played.

Only the musician should play the instrument! Many accidents are caused by siblings trying the instrument out.

If something breaks or does not work, ALWAYS bring it to Mrs. Curry first. Please don't

try to fix it at home.
Brass - do not use too much oil on your valves!

All band lessons will take place in the portable. Students are responsible for knowing their lesson days and times. Mrs. Curry will meet the students in their pod and walk them to and from the portable as a group.