



Chris Fairchild, Band Director
38174 W Colonial Highway
Hamilton, VA 20158

Telephone: (540) 751-2500
Christopher.Fairchild@lcps.org
<https://www.lcps.org/Page/16362>

Dear Sixth Grade Band Student and Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the Harmony Middle School Band program! The band program at Harmony Middle School has a long history of excellence, and I am excited to welcome you to help us continue this long standing tradition!

The 6th Grade Band class is a beginning level course, offering instruction in beginning Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone, Tuba, and Mallet Percussion. Later in the school year, students that have begun Mallet Percussion will begin learning non-pitched Percussion (snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, etc.).

As you know, we will begin this school year in a 100% distance learning environment. I am committed to making this beginning band experience a great one for our students! All of our classes are set up so that we will only have one or two instruments being taught at a time, which will make class time more like a private lesson than group instruction. We WILL be playing our instruments during synchronous learning sessions, and I will give detailed practice guides for students for their “offline” practice sessions. Students will have the opportunity to play a note or two alone or in small groups during the synchronous learning time (so that I can check their pitch and tone quality and give immediate feedback), as well as submit audio/video through Schoology for feedback.

Students will need to have their instrument for use during class by **September 21, 2020**. **Students that play Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, and Trombone are expected to get their own instrument for use in class.** There are several local music stores with great rent-to-own programs. Purchasing a quality used instrument from a reputable source may be another good option for you. Please be careful when purchasing new instruments online for “too good to be true” prices - many times these instruments are not of good quality. If you are unable to get an instrument on your own, please contact Mr. Fairchild and I will help in any way I can!

School instruments are available to rent in some circumstances. **Students that play Bassoon, French Horn, Baritone, and Tuba are strongly advised to rent a school instrument from Harmony Middle School!** Cost for the instrument is \$100 for the school year. Tuba students will get a home practice instrument, and will have access to a separate instrument for use at school when in-person learning returns. We also have a very limited availability of school clarinets, trumpets, and trombones available if you have a financial need and cannot afford to rent or purchase an instrument on your own. Please contact Mr. Fairchild for details on renting a school instrument!

I look forward to getting started with instruments as soon as we can! We will start the year with some note/rhythm reading instruction, and I will go over assembly of instruments as well prior to starting play (as well as a daily review for several classes after that!). Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the Harmony Band program!

HOME PRACTICE

Home practice is essential for student success. Students are required to bring their instrument home for practice several times a week, and it is strongly recommended for students to bring their instrument home every day. Please work at least 15-20 minutes of practice time into your child's daily homework routine. A good practice session for a first year player would include:

- Warm-up (breathing exercises, long tones, review of test exercises): 3-5 minutes
- Assigned exercises "where we are in the book right now": 5-10 minutes
- Performance music: 5-10 minutes

Students are encouraged to practice with friends in small group settings when desired and if it can be done safely! Group practice can be a great motivation to students!

6th Grade Band Calendar

Note - in the event that we are still in a virtual learning environment at the time of the below rehearsals and performances, the rehearsal will be cancelled and the performance will switch to a virtual concert. Students will submit recordings of themselves playing their performance music, to be edited into an ensemble performance. If we are on a hybrid model by this time, or have returned to 100% in person learning with restrictions on large gatherings, performances may be transitioned to virtual as well.

Wednesday, Dec. 16, 3:45-5:30pm	6th Grade Band Rehearsal
Thursday, Dec. 17, 7pm	Winter Concert - 6th Grade Band
Wednesday, June 2, 3:45-5:30pm	6th Grade Band Rehearsal
Thursday, June 3, 7:00pm	Spring Concert - 6th Grade Band

MUSIC SUPPLIES AND ACCESSORIES

METHOD BOOK: 6th grade band students will be provided all instructional materials this year! No method book is required! Pages will be posted in Schoology as we get to them in class, and the entire book will be available as well. Once we return to in-person learning, students will get their own paper copy of the method book, but if that helps you with virtual learning, please feel free to print your own copy at home!

INSTRUMENTS: All students who play Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, and Mallet Percussion will be required to have their own instrument for school and home use. Percussionists should rent or purchase a drum pad and bell set OR a "bell kit" like the ones available at the local music stores. *Students who play Bassoon, French Horn, Baritone, and Tuba may rent a school instrument for \$100.* Students that play Tuba will rent a home instrument that will stay at home throughout the year, and use a school tuba that stays at school in class once we return to in-person learning. The rental fee covers use of both the home and school instrument.

We do have a limited number of school clarinets, trumpets, and trombones to rent for 6th Graders if you are unable to get your own instrument. If you need to rent a school instrument, please complete the google form and send payment to Harmony Middle School, and contact Mr. Fairchild as soon as possible.

OTHER SUPPLIES: Some cleaning supplies, reeds, etc. are needed in addition to a basic instrument. *Please see the following pages for supplies specific to each instrument.*

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR BAND

FLUTE:

- Instrument (suggested brands: Gemeinhardt, Yamaha, Selmer, Armstrong, Jupiter)
 - Flutes should be silver. Lip plate may be silver or gold plated.
- Handkerchief style cleaning cloth
- Cleaning/tuning rod

OBOE:

- Instrument (suggested brands: Fox, Selmer, Renard, Yamaha, Armstrong)
 - Oboes should be black or brown.
- Bore swab
- Cork grease
- Small container to soak reeds (old camera film case, pill bottle, etc.)
- Reeds (strength medium soft). Suggested brands - Jones, Singin' Dog, Legere
- Reed case

BASSOON:

- Instrument (can be rented from the Harmony MS band program).
- Bore swab
- Cork grease
- Small container to soak reeds (old camera film case, pill bottle, etc.)
- Reeds (strength medium soft). Suggested brands - Jones, Singin' Dog, Legere
- Reed case

CLARINET:

- Instrument (suggested brands: Buffet, Selmer, Yamaha, LeBlanc, Armstrong, Jupiter)
 - Clarinets should be black or brown.
- Cork grease
- Bore swab (handkerchief or silk)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Box of 10 reeds (strength #2 ½.) Suggested brands - Juno, VanDoren, Mitchell Lurie

SAXOPHONE:

- Instrument (suggested brands: Yamaha, Selmer, Keilwerth, Conn, King, Jupiter)
 - Saxophones should be brass or silver.
- Cork grease
- Neck swab and Bore swab (handkerchief style bore swab works best!)
- Mouthpiece brush
- Box of 10 reeds (strength #2 ½.) Suggested brands - Juno, VanDoren, Rico Royal

FRENCH HORN:

- Instrument (can be rented from the Harmony MS band program)
- Mouthpiece (Bach, Blessing, or Schilke 11 preferred)
- Rotary oil
- Mouthpiece brush

TRUMPET:

- Instrument (suggested brands: Bach, Kanstul, Selmer, Holton, Yamaha, Getzen, Conn, King, Jupiter)
 - Trumpets should be brass or silver.
- Valve oil and slide grease
- Cleaning snake
- Mouthpiece brush

TROMBONE:

- Instrument (suggested brands: Selmer, Yamaha, Kanstul, Bach, Getzen, King, Conn, Jupiter)
 - Trombones should be brass or silver.
- Slide oil OR slide cream and small spray bottle for water
- Cleaning snake
- Mouthpiece brush

BARITONE:

- Instrument (can be rented from the Harmony MS band program)
- Mouthpiece (Bach or Blessing 6 ½AL preferred)
- Valve oil
- Mouthpiece brush

TUBA:

- Instrument (can be rented from the Harmony MS band program)
- Mouthpiece (Conn Helleberg 7B, Bach 18, or Blessing 18 preferred)
- Valve oil
- Mouthpiece brush
- Small case for mouthpiece

PERCUSSION:

- Bell kit with practice pad (suggested brands: Pearl, Ludwig, Mapex, Yamaha, Vic Firth)
 - Bell kit should include a bell set/xylophone and drum pad or snare drum.
- Stick bag for storage of sticks and mallets
- One pair of drum sticks (suggested brands: Vic Firth, Pro Mark)
- One pair of plastic or rubber bell mallets.
- One pair of yarn mallets (optional to start the 2020-21 school year - will be used for some mallet percussion and suspended cymbals once we return to the building).

