

# **JOIN THE BAND!!**

Salem Area Catholic Schools Band at Blanchet  
Supported by the Blanchet Community Foundation

Beginning January 17, Salem Area Catholic School students in grades 5-8 will now have the opportunity to learn how to play a band instrument in an after school band program supported by the Blanchet Community Foundation. Students can choose one of many fun instruments to play including the flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone or percussion. Students who commit to playing in band will learn how to play the instrument of their choice, play in school concerts for family and friends and become a member of a program that will continue to grow!

Instruction will be done to encourage proper posture, breathing, embouchure and tone development; reading beginning music notation; sight reading; basic music theory; ear training and listening skills; equipment care and maintenance; playing alone and as part of the ensemble; and effective practice habits.

Rehearsals will take place with Mrs. Hettwer at Blanchet Catholic School in Wiegand Arts Center on Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30-4:45 p.m. A nominal fee of \$25 made out to BCF will be charged to defray incidental costs. Parents and students will need to work out their own transportation and provide their own band instrument and supplies.

Several music stores in the area have rental programs that make it very easy to buy and maintain a band instrument. Most of them apply all of the rental payments to the purchase of the instrument, while guaranteeing the quality of the instrument and making any repairs for free or at nominal cost. Online sites such as Craigslist and eBay often have good instruments at reasonable prices, but I advise against this unless you know what you are buying. I have seen many instruments that were purchased online that ended up being virtually unusable.

**The Benefits...** The study of music is a wonderful tool for developing and encouraging:

- Problem Solving
- Goal setting
- Teamwork and cohesiveness
- Work ethic
- Self-expression
- Creativity and individuality
- Sensitivity
- Perceptual-motor development
- Coordination
- Self-confidence and esteem
- Concentration
- Poise
- Intelligence in other areas
- Memory skills

**Materials...**

- An instrument in good working condition as well as appropriate accessories.
- Essential Elements 2000 Book 1. Several music stores in Salem carry this book. Purchase the book that corresponds with the student's instrument.

**Requirements...**

- Students are encouraged to practice at least 60 min. a week.
- This is a performance-based activity and students are required to participate in all public appearances of the band (Spring concert and possible area elementary school performances)
- Band uniform: Boys – black pants, socks, shoes and a white dress shirt. Girls – black pants/skirt, socks, shoes and a white dress shirt

**How to choose an instrument...**

- Find out what your student wants to play. If they are playing an instrument they want to play, then they are more likely to practice. The more they practice the greater their success.
- The shape of the student's mouth (embouchure) and size of instrument matters a little bit (see *Meet the Band Instrument Family*).
- If you are choosing an instrument based on the cost, make sure it is an instrument the student wants to play. If it is a garage sale or internet find, make sure it is serviced and in good working condition.
- You may set up a time with Mrs. Hettwer to try out different instruments.
- Carefully read the information on *Meet the Band Instrument Family* to help assist you and your student in choosing an instrument with which they can be SUCCESSFUL!

For more information, please contact Kami Hettwer at [kamihettwer@blanchetcatholicschool.com](mailto:kamihettwer@blanchetcatholicschool.com)

## Meet the Band Instrument Family

### Choosing an Instrument

**Flute** -The flute is one of the most popular instruments for beginners. Students are able to play pleasant little melodies within the first few weeks. I recommend that only the children who are highly motivated and really want to play the flute start on this instrument. If a child has small hands, the flute might be a better choice. A child with an overbite usually makes an excellent flute player. The child with even teeth and lips that are firm usually will be successful. The child cannot have a “cupid’s tip” on the top lip. The child’s left arm must be long enough to reach across the body in order to hold to flute in proper playing position.

**Clarinet** -The clarinet is also a popular instrument for beginners. The clarinet takes more patience. It is more difficult to produce a pleasing tone when starting out, but with consistent practice the tone can be refined. The hard part about playing clarinet is covering the holes. Fingers must be able to cover all the holes properly or you will not get a good sound. Most of the time, you will only get airy sounds or squeaks. Students with different mouth, lip, and teeth formations can be successful.

**Oboe** -In concert band, the oboe is often featured as a solo instrument. Because of this, the oboe section needs very few players. The oboe player needs to have a persistent nature and show strong musical potential. The parent must be willing to let their child take private lessons with a professional. The oboe is an instrument that requires special care and attention that can only come through private lessons. Previous piano experience is strongly recommended.

**Alto Sax** -Since the introduction of the Sax to numerous rock bands, this has become a popular instrument to kids. Of all the band instruments available, this instrument has the highest drop-out level. If the child is dedicated, the success rate is quick and beneficial. The physical qualifications are the same as clarinet.

**Tenor Sax** -Like the Alto Sax, this instrument is very popular because of its connection with jazz and rock music. A typical concert band needs one, maybe two, Tenor Sax players. It is often given counter-melodies rather than the melody. Because of its larger size, the tenor can sometimes be difficult for smaller individuals to manage physically. Because of the higher cost of the Saxophone, I recommend that before starting, you talk to your child about the strong commitment he or she has to make before choosing this instrument. See notes on Clarinet and Alto Sax.

**Trumpet** - The success rate is very high. You might have to add an extra room on your house when your child practices, but believe me it gets better with time (just kidding!). The child should have these qualities: straight teeth, thin lips (bigger lips will require a bigger mouthpiece), no “cupid’s tip” on the top lip.

**French Horn** -The French Horn is an instrument that adds considerable beauty to the band and requires players with above average musical talent. If you have a good ear and want to play a major role in contributing to the band, French horn is for you. The parent must be willing to let their child take private lessons with a professional. The French Horn is an instrument that requires special care and attention that can only come through private lessons. The child should have these qualities: thin lips (bigger lips will require a bigger mouthpiece), no “cupid’s tip” on the top lip.

**Trombone** - The Trombone takes time and patience to learn but is one of the most fun instruments to play. It looks harder to play than it actually is. Lots of Trombones are needed!!! The success rate is high because of the constant need in all the bands (jazz band, pep band, and concert band). The student needs to have long arms and a good ear.

**Baritone/Euphonium**- The Baritone is a fun instrument to play since it has many melodic parts in band music. It requires a strong desire and has a high success rate.

**Percussion** -If your child likes to pound on things at home, please don't assume he or she will make a good drummer! Most kids associate drums as starting out on a "Drum-set" like they see in Rock bands. The modern Concert Band does not have drummers, but percussionists. They will be trained on bells, snare drum, bass drum, auxiliary percussion, xylophones, chimes, and timpani. The percussion section sometimes gets so large that not everyone can play at the same time. Due to this problem, I am only offering the few percussion positions to students with piano or percussion background. Students who begin on percussion are encouraged to purchase or rent a set of bells and a snare drum with the appropriate sticks and mallets. If your child meets these requirements, please contact Mrs. Hettwer at [Kamihettwer@blanchetcatholicschool.com](mailto:Kamihettwer@blanchetcatholicschool.com).

# Salem Area Catholic Schools Band Sign-Up Sheet

Supported by the Blanchet Community Foundation

Please fill out this form and return it to your school office by January 13, 2017

(Fees will be collected at our first rehearsal on January 17, 2017)

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had piano lessons? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_ if yes, how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had lessons on a band instrument? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_ if yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_  
and for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument Choices: Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone/Tuba or Percussion

First Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Second Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Third Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to set up a time to try out different band instruments with Mrs. Hettwer? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the information on joining the Salem Area Catholic Schools Band at Blanchet including the dates, times, fees, benefits, materials, requirements and how to choose an instrument. I am aware that we will need to provide our own instrument and supplies and provide transportation to and from Blanchet.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in carpooling with other families from your elementary school? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions/comments \_\_\_\_\_

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