**![C:\Users\sreabe\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\55FLBKK0\MC900078817[1].wmf]()Beginning Band Night**

**Informational Packet**

**Overview of the Band Program**

The Riverview Middle School Band Program consists currently of about 250 students in 4 performing ensembles. There are three Concert Bands separated by grade, and one Jazz Band. Students play a variety of music and perform publicly throughout the school year. Our students are able to begin learning an instrument in the 6th grade. It is much easier to start with everyone from the beginning. Many people believe you need to be naturally good at music, but an instrument can be learned. Through study and practice, students learn how to play music on an instrument much like they learned how to tie their shoes or solve math problems.

**Band Schedule**

6th grade students participate in band class every other day. Each student will also attend a 15 minute small group lesson once per 6 day rotation to equal about 8 lessons per trimester. There is one concert per trimester for the 6th Grade Band. In 7th and 8th grade, students will have the opportunity to participate in fun activities such as Solo/Ensemble Festival, Jazz Band, Pep Band at the High School, and the Homecoming Parade.

**Grading**

Students are graded on effort to learn the skills necessary to play music and reaching goals, not talent. Band is like any other class; we will have assignments and assessments. Since we are a performance based class, our final assessment of a unit in the trimester is in the form of a concert. This experience cannot be duplicated, so it is crucial for your child to be there.

*40% - Lessons/Skill Assessment/Preparation/Participation*

*30% - Concerts/Etiquette and Attendance*

*20% - Assignments/Quizzes/Projects*

*10% - Class Participation/Attitude/Formative Assessment*

**Selection of Instruments**

The 5th grade students participated in an Instrument Demo Concert at the High School with all the band members to see and hear the instruments. Then students were tested based off of their first three choices. It is important for students to play something they will be successful with based on physical attributes and a desire to work at the instrument. We discuss favorites and narrow it down from the choices.

**Instrument Rental/Purchase**

Once you go through the sticker shock, try to remember than an instrument is an investment in your child’s education and a fun activity that they will remember with several stories. Many students find a home with friends in the band room, and are able to be active in school by participating in our groups. So many times I hear “I wish I would have learned to play music”, or “I wish I would have stuck with it longer.” That being said, the investment in an instrument will pay off tenfold in memories, special family events, and an appreciation for music that will last a lifetime.

 **Obtaining an instrument can happen in a few ways.**

* ***If you already own an instrument,*** get it checked out to make sure it is in working condition. Nothing is worse than using a tool that constantly breaks or cooking with an oven that won’t work at the right temperature. It is hard enough at the beginning with a perfect instrument, and an instrument in good condition will cost less money in upkeep, just like a car.
* ***Rent to Own*** is the best option if you are looking to jump in and get started as a first time band student. Dreams Unlimited Music Store has a great program with quality student line instruments that are cost effective and of good quality.
* ***Purchasing a new instrument*** – **BE CAREFUL!!** If something is advertised as BRAND NEW INCLUDING ALL ACCESSORIES for $150, it means that the parts are cheap and the brand is not a quality that will last through a beginner. Many times, these instruments cannot be repaired and technicians will refuse to work on them because they can’t get parts or guarantee that they will work again. Please purchase from a reputable dealer, or contact me with questions. Sometimes great quality used instruments can be found at a bargain, you just have to know what you are looking for (when using Craig’s List, garage sales). Antique stores are not a good place to purchase instruments unless you want a clarinet lamp**. NO PURPLE, BLUE, or other odd colored instruments! While they may look cool, they sound terrible and will break easily.**
* ***Ask around your family and friends***. You might be able to borrow an instrument or purchase it from them.
* ***School instruments*** –Large sized instruments that would be expensive to rent/purchase like Tuba, Euphonium, Bari Sax, French Horn, and Bassoon are available through the school for a yearly rental fee. These instruments are limited, and students many not receive their first choice.

*If you truly need help, I do not want to turn away students from this wonderful experience. Do not let money be a factor in your decision to join the band program. If you are in need of financial assistance, please contact me we will figure something out.*

**Concert Dates 2017/2018 - - -** Mark your calendar now! Yes, concerts are graded and required.

**Tuesday, November 14th** **2017**– 6th Grade Fall Band/Choir Concert in the RV Auditorium

**Thursday, February 8th** **2018**– 6th/7th/ 8th Grade Winter Band Concert in the RV Auditorium

**Thursday, May 10th  2018**– 6th/7th/8th Grade Spring Band Concert in the RV Auditorium

**Summer School Beginning Band Blast Off - - - August 14 – 17 and August 21-24, 2017**

Set your child up for success for the beginning of the school year by attending our summer lessons! All new band students participate in summer lessons. See the flyer details. The lessons are FREE!

Your child will be automatically enrolled, and a schedule will be sent out via mail and posted to our website: www.riverviewband.weebly.com

**Supplies Needed for Playing in Band:**

* Instrument
* Care/Supply Kit for each instrument including Essential Elements Book 1 for instrument

 (see detailed list or buy as a package from Dreams Unlimited)

* White dress shirt, black pants, black shoes, black socks for concerts
* Pencils

**FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions**

***How much should I be practicing?***How much is not as important as how often and if the student is reaching goals. Typically it is recommended to start with 15 minutes a day. When the newness wears off, students may need some encouragement to keep practicing at home from family. When you make a large investment in an instrument, you should be hearing music coming from down the hall or upstairs frequently. Instruments need to be played and practiced not only at school, but at home. A little is better than none! Set a regular routine, space, and time to eliminate excuses and get it done!

***Will I be good at this?***If you want to succeed, then yes you will! When learning something completely new, it is hard first. Keep trying and work hard. Parents can help their students through encouragement, keeping students accountable with practice, and asking to hear what we are working on in class.

***Can I take both band and choir?***Yes! In fact, band and choir meet on opposite days for exactly this reason! Being in both will make you a better musician and you will have many fun opportunities!

***Will band conflict with sports?***No. Many of our band members also play sports. We will work together to fix any conflicts. In high school, most of the band students are also active in sports.

***What if we just can’t afford an instrument?*** Please contact me and I will help you figure something out.

***May I change instruments if I want to?***Once and a while, the first choice isn’t the best one. Talk to Mrs. Reabe, as each situation will be dealt with individually. Progress, effort, and attendance to lessons will be taken into account when deciding if a switch would help the student be more successful.

***How much does an instrument cost?*** It varies, and new ones will cost more than used instruments. An instrument is an investment, and a good instrument can last a lifetime. See rental handout for prices.

**Learning an instrument can be challenging, but stick with it. Ignore the first few pleas (tantrums in some cases) to quit when it becomes hard. Many things in life worth doing are usually hard, but these are the most rewarding experiences.**

If you have more questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or email and I would be happy to help. I am looking forward to starting this journey with your child next year!

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Mrs. Sarah Reabe – Band Director

sreabe@plymouth.k12.wi.us (920)892-4353 ex2439