



from the desk of:
 Jay Dorfman, director of instrumental music
 Delran Intermediate School
 Delran Middle School
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Dear parents,

Among the many accommodations and programs available to your child in our district, **please consider instrumental music**. This week, members of the Delran Middle School Band and I will be visiting the 4th grade classrooms (during their music class) to demonstrate the various instruments offered (see attached). Please check out the information packet that accompanies this letter. *4th grade is the primary year to give music performance a shot.* 5th grade provides a “second chance” at beginner lessons at DIS, but the vast majority of students who go on to enjoy many fulfilling years of musical studies here in Delran, began in 4th grade.

Studies have shown that during the very first year instrumental music is included into a student's weekly routine, math comprehension increases, social interaction improves, and kids experience a significant boost in self-esteem. Music isn't for everyone; however our band program includes kids of all kinds: We have many athletes from all sports in our band, as well as physically challenged kids. Scholastically speaking, many students are high achievers, while several others have learning difficulties. Our band is multi-cultural, and is comprised of boys and girls of all shapes and sizes!

Read both sides of the attached sheet entitled “**Important Information About Instrumental Music**” with your child. It will explain how our instrumental program works. It also contains a brief description of each instrument to help in deciding which would be most appropriate for your child. After discussing the pro’s and con’s of each together, it’s usually best to let the student choose which instrument to begin on. If you have any questions, or would like to set up a personal evaluation for your child (with or without you there) feel free to contact me at either the phone number or e-mail address at the top of the page, and I will be glad to help you with any concerns you might have. In choosing an instrument I want to set your child up for **SUCCESS!**

If you would like to get your child started in our instrumental program, please detach the bottom portion of this sheet, fill in the information, and **have your child turn it in to his/her teacher or place it in my mailbox in the main office before Back to School Night, Sept 16th.** I look forward to sharing the fantastic world of music with your child this year.

Yours in harmony,

BEGINNING BAND FORM:

DIRECTIONS: Tear at the line, fill out form, and return to Mr. Dorfman at Delran Intermediate School ASAP! To ensure that records are accurate, and so that you receive all info in a timely manner, PLEASE FILL IN THIS FORM NEATLY!

Student’s name _____ Gender: circle one **M F** Teacher _____

Address _____ Home phone _____

Parents’ name(s) 1. _____ 2. _____

Parents’ cell(s) 1. _____ 2. _____

Parents’ email(s) 1. _____ 2. _____

Important Information About Music Lessons at Delran Intermediate School

DIS OPEN HOUSE - SEPTEMBER 16TH

How our band program works: Beginning instrumental lessons are available to students in 4th & 5th grades. Children signed up for lessons will be placed in a lesson group, (usually 4 - 8 students) and are pulled out of their regular class **once a week for 1 period (approx. 40 min.)**. The time changes each week so that the students won't always miss the same subject each week. A **lesson schedule** will be **posted online** (download-able), and throughout DIS (I suggest tacking it to the fridge at home as well!). In addition to the group lessons, all beginners are required to participate in **beginner band**, which will meet **after-school till 3:40 PM every Wednesday starting a little later in the year**. **Late buses will be available** to take the children home. Toward the end of the school year **you will have an opportunity to hear your child perform at our annual End-of-the-Year Concert!**

Lessons at Delran Intermediate School, while offered for free, do require that the students involved learn on their own instrument. This means that if you do not already own one, you will need to obtain one. Renting an instrument makes the most sense for beginners, because the expense is minimal, plus it provides a “trial period” for the student. In addition to the instrument, and a folding music stand (for at-home practice), **your child will also need the proper lesson book:**



****Essential Elements, Book 1** (for the appropriate instrument) approx. \$10.

A representative from the **Music and Arts Center** (musicarts.com) will be at **Back-to-School Night Sept 16th**. M&A is the company that services our leasing program. They have been providing top-quality musical instruments for purchase or on a rent-to-own basis (more appropriate for beginners) for many years and have a well-respected reputation for doing so. You are certainly free to obtain your instrument from whomever you choose, however keep in mind that M&A is *based right here in Delran*.



If you and your child would like to explore instrumental music this year, please make sure to fill out the bottom portion of the welcome letter and return it to my (Mr Dorfman's) mailbox A.S.A.P. **Lessons will begin very soon**, starting with preliminary lessons where the instruments will be introduced, (your child will have the opportunity to try them all) and universal concepts will be taught.

Questions about our music program?
Contact: **Jay Dorfman @ 856-905-4295 / jdorfman@delranschools.org**



A list of the instruments offered in the first year, and a brief description of each appears on the next page!

Musical Instruments Offered In The First Year At Delran Intermediate School



Flute - the smallest and lightest, it plays the high notes. This instrument is relatively simple to maintain, although, some students experience difficulty holding it correctly and getting a good tone out is a little tricky at first. Still, it's consistently among the most popular choices for beginners.



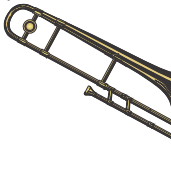
Clarinet - also comes in a relatively small and lightweight case. While this instrument is relatively easy to get a sound out of right away, it does require the additional expense of *reeds* (a box of 10 should last a full school year if they are taken care of). The clarinets are the primary voice of the concert band; they play the melody most often therefore every good concert band needs plenty of them.



Alto Saxophone - very popular among kids and grown ups because of its wide use in jazz and pop music. Like the clarinet this instrument is relatively easy to get a good sound out of but also requires the additional expense of *reeds* (a box of 10 should last a full school year if they are taken care of). It's not small, it's not light, and it's not cheap! (as you'll see by the enclosed rental contract)



Trumpet - my choice when I was in 4th grade, the trumpet sound is bright and powerful! The only maintenance needed is occasionally oiling the valves (valve oil comes with the instrument). The case, just slightly smaller than the sax, is surprisingly light. Like all members of the brass family it requires the player to buzz the lips into a cup-shaped mouthpiece. A common misconception is that "since there are only 3 buttons, it must be easy". To the contrary, since there are only 3 valves, the player must use the facial muscles to differentiate the various notes. Don't worry, I'll show 'em how!



Trombone - this instrument is a lot of fun! It's the lowest pitched wind instrument we offer at the beginning level. The case is long and slim but surprisingly light. Also a member of the brass family, it requires the player to buzz the lips into a cup-shaped mouthpiece but instead of valves the trombone uses a single slide, giving it a unique sound.



Electric bass - real popular because every rock band has one and it looks cool! Be forewarned: this is a tough instrument to learn. It requires exceptional fine motor skills. Although it appears similar to a guitar, understand that **it isn't one**. You don't strum chords; you pluck individual notes one at a time. Instead of 6 thin strings it has 4 thick ones. As the name implies, it plays very low-pitched bass notes. Students usually begin on a junior sized bass (about 4 feet long) If purchasing your own, be sure to include a tuner, an amplifier, and a good quality instrument cable.



Percussion (drums) - the rental includes a snare drum, folding chrome stand and drum sticks; heavy equipment for some students, plus setting it up and getting it all back into the case takes practice. Drums are the only band instrument played standing up. While the drum seems relatively easy to play, it requires a basic sense of rhythm that not all musicians have. Therefore, before signing up for drums, I must meet with your child individually. All percussion students must also learn a variety of instruments; cymbals, bass drum, triangle, ratchets, wood blocks, whistles, etc. Percussionists, more so than the other instrumentalists, must understand the concepts of *courtesy and cooperation*. Many students sign up for drums each year, and some selections that we perform only require 3 or 4 players, so "sitting one out" at the concert is unfortunately a necessary evil for drummers.



Bell Kit (Mallets - xylophone/bells) - the rental includes a small set of orchestra bells. It looks like a xylophone made of metal. This is the newest instrument offered at our school, and is ideal for students who already play the piano (it's set up just like one) or ones who would like to play a melody instrument but would rather not play a wind instrument! The official name for the orchestra bells is the "glockenspiel".