

June 2021

Dear Elementary Students and Parents:

I am excited to tell you about your opportunity to learn how to play a band instrument when you enter the fourth or fifth grade in Germantown. I was offered the opportunity to play percussion in my school band starting in the fourth grade, and my decision to play in the band has ultimately led me to a rewarding and enjoyable career as a school band director. Even if I had not decided to teach music for a living, I still would be able to look back on so many years of great music, personal pride in what I accomplished, and SO MUCH FUN!

Students who participate in the Germantown band program will receive a weekly small-group lesson, and they will be grouped with other students who play the same instrument. In these lessons, students will learn how to play their instruments, how to read musical notation, and how to play simple songs on their instruments. These lessons will continue throughout the full school year, and will culminate with the opportunity to perform in the spring concert in May of 2022. Once students become second-year band students, they will have the opportunity to participate in large-group band rehearsals in addition to their small-group lessons, as well as the opportunity to perform in the winter AND spring concerts!

Playing music is great fun and is extremely rewarding, but it also requires a substantial amount of hard work, dedication, and patience. That said, all of my students who have practiced regularly and shown dedication to their musical studies have made fantastic progress on their instruments. Because of that, I believe that any Germantown band student willing to put in the required time and energy will be successful in band.

The instruments that the students can learn through the Germantown band program are of the woodwind, brass, and percussion variety. Specifically, students can play flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, French horn, trumpet, trombone, or percussion in the Germantown band. Please note that, while piano and guitar are wonderful instruments that play enormous roles in our world's musical landscape, they are not "concert band" instruments and thus are not among the instruments students can play in the Germantown band. Also, please note that larger woodwind and brass instruments such as bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, bassoon, baritone horn, and tuba are simply too large to be successfully played by most elementary students.

Each of the aforementioned instruments will be demonstrated to next year's fourth and fifth graders in June. Additionally, the music department will host a Zoom Q and A session about band on Thursday, June 10th, from 5PM until 5:30 PM. The link for this Zoom session will be shared on the GCS Facebook page and via email.

Students interested in participating in band next year should complete and return the reverse side of this form to their classroom teacher by **Monday, June 14th**. You will notice that each student must select TWO instrument choices. This is because the number of students playing each instrument in the band has to be balanced. While I will make every effort to assign students their first choice of instrument, it may not be possible in all cases.

Once instrument assignments are made, please make arrangements to secure an instrument before the new school year begins. Please do NOT purchase or rent an instrument before I make instrument assignments. I very highly recommend John Keal Music's rent-to-own program. Information about this program can be found online at www.johnkealmusic.com, or over the phone at (518) 482-4405. Their program works well for many people, but it is not the only option. If you already own an instrument that you would like me to inspect, I would be happy to do so. Please understand that NO student will be denied the opportunity to learn a band instrument due to financial constraints; if you are concerned about your ability to finance an instrument rental or purchase, please email me so we can explore some options. Lastly, please avoid purchasing instruments from big-box stores such as Walmart or Target, or websites such as Craigslist or eBay, as such instruments are often defective, or of such poor quality that they discourage students from playing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at dgalliher@germantowncsd.org. I look forward to working with an awesome elementary band next year!

Musically,

Daniel Galliher, GCS Band Director

First, please **circle** your first choice instrument and **box** your second choice instrument.

Flute	Clarinet	Alto Saxophone	Trumpet
	Trombone	French Horn	Percussion

Next, please note what you will need to acquire, and/or replenish as needed, in addition to the instrument.

Clarinet and Alto Saxophone — Reeds (#2 hardness to start), Cleaning Swab
Trumpet and French Horn — Valve or Rotor Oil, Slide Grease, Cleaning “snake”
Trombone — Slide Grease, Cleaning “snake”
Percussion — Bell kit, practice pad, snare drum sticks, and bell mallets
(Please note that all required percussion items are included in John Keal Music’s “bell kit”.)

Now, please read the following questions thoroughly and make sure you can answer “yes” to all of them . . .

1. Are you willing to patiently work through your frustration when things don’t come together as well as you would like them to?
3. Will you find the time to practice your instrument on a regular basis, even when your schedule gets crazy?
4. Are you excited to learn something new, have a great time doing it, and feel fantastic when your hard work pays off at the concert?

Now, please fill in the blanks below . . .

Name: _____
Classroom Teacher: _____
Parent / Guardian Name: _____
Parent / Guardian Email: _____
Parent / Guardian Phone: _____
Favorite band or singer: _____