

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As a 5th Grade Student at the Greencastle-Antrim Elementary School, your child finally has the opportunity to do what so many successful students have done before them: be part of the BAND! We know that for many of you, this will be your first exposure to instrumental music. Music education is more than just playing an instrument; it is immersing your child in a culture that instills discipline, self-reliance, engagement, emotional and academic development in order to provide a well-rounded education. Now is the time to start your child in music, and the Greencastle-Antrim Elementary Band is the place to do it! Playing an instrument does not depend on your child's musical skill or aptitude, but rather their interest, enthusiasm, and love of music as a whole.

Included in this letter is information regarding our program, instrument selection, and our Informational/Rental meeting. The band info and rental night will be held on Monday, August 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the elementary gym. A Zoom option will also be available. Please plan to attend this meeting with your child even if you are an experienced "Band Parent." If you cannot attend, a link to the presentation will be available via the 5th Grade Band website, along with other pertinent information.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/9930915519?pwd=WElmc1VKbzVPbFJwenFRcHU2NU9vdz09>

Meeting ID: 993 091 5519

Passcode: 7U6hHG

To ensure that your child is scheduled for band lessons, please complete the Google Form by Tuesday, August 24. The sign-up form was sent home with your child on Thursday, emailed to your Power School email address, and can be found on the 5th Grade Band website.

Students will receive one 30-minute lesson during the school day every Day 6 in small groups. In order to start lessons promptly, Menchey Music will be delivering all rented instruments to the school through their rent-to-own program. The instrument can be returned or exchanged at any time if your child does not continue in the program or wishes to switch to a new instrument. Any questions about the rental program can be directed to Menchey Music in Hanover, PA 717-637-2185 or 1-888-MENCHEY. Please go to www.mencheymusic.com to rent your child's instrument (secure website). We have only a handful of school-owned instruments in case of financial need (i.e. Free lunch qualified students). Please contact us and we can try to arrange for an instrument for your child.

If you already have an instrument, please send me an email with a photo of the instrument and if you know its condition, make, model, last time it was serviced by a repair technician, where it was purchased, etc. If you have any questions, you may email me at abalascik@gcasd.org.

Frequently Asked Questions What if I am not sure if I want my child to participate in band? As a parent you've probably at one point said, "Try it before you decide you don't like it." Band is the same way. EVERY child should sign up for band now even if you or they are unsure. Of course your child can join at any time between 5th-12th grade, but this is such an exciting opportunity for 5th grade students! Better to get started early.

What if I cannot attend the parent meeting? Links to the meeting information can be found on the 5th Grade Instrumental Music website (see previous page for URL)

What if my child has never played an instrument, or doesn't know how to read music? That's ok! Most students begin band with little or no previous experience. We start by learning how to make a good first sound on the instrument, how to play the first few notes, and how to read notes and rhythms. No experience necessary! Sign up for band.

How much homework is assigned? Band is no different than any other curricular area. Your child is expected to spend time practicing their instrument at home each and every day. Make practicing a part of your daily family routine.

What if I want to participate in sports too? Are there required after-school band activities? Band is a class, not an after-school activity. The only required after-school events we have are two or three concerts, which generally start at 7:00 PM. We really try to schedule concerts around sports games. Many students do both school sports, community sports, and band throughout the duration of their middle school/high school years in the G-ASD. Be a multi-talented, versatile, and well-rounded student and sign up for band.

Which instruments can students choose to play? What if my child wants to play drums / percussion? Flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn (minimum 3 students needed), trombone and comprehensive percussion. All students choosing to play a percussion instrument must learn both mallet percussion and snare (piano lesson experience is highly recommended for percussion students.)

Where do I rent an instrument or buy the other supplies? The GASD Music Department recommends Menchey Music. They provide excellent service, a member of their staff visits our school every week, and they have a convenient, high-quality rent-to-own program.

What if I want to just buy a used instrument at a pawn shop, Craigslist, or Amazon.com? We do not recommend this, for many reasons, especially if you do not know how to check if the instrument is in playing condition. You also need to make sure it is a good brand that will hold up over time, or you will spend more money on repairs than you would have spent renting a good instrument from Menchey Music. Sites like Amazon sell toys disguised as instruments: buyer beware....See the band website for more information on renting vs. buying.

What if I already own an instrument? If you already have an instrument, please send an email to one of the 5th Grade directors so I can assess the instrument virtually. It may need repairs in order to be ready for the first day of class. Email any other questions to Mrs. Balascik at abalascik@gcasd.org

I am SO excited to embark on this journey with your children! This is a very exciting time!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Balascik