

2017 Mason Middle School Elementary Band & Orchestra Parent Guide

Transportation

Students may walk to Mason or parents can drop them off. Elementary students taking band may also ride the middle school buses to school. (We have bus passes for students who need them.) Bus schedules are found on the district's web site and at Mason's main office. Shuttle buses will take students back to their elementary schools after band.

Student Drop-off Zone

The drop-off zone is accessed from the west end of the building on 29th street. Drop kids off at the cafeteria doors, just past the 2nd speed bump. For the safety of our students, please do not use the staff parking lot (between the field and school building) to drop off your child.

Attendance and Absences

If your child will be absent from class, please leave us a voicemail or better yet, an email so we know he/she is safe at home. Students should plan to attend class on all assigned days, even when they don't have their instrument. Frequent absences cause students to fall behind, so try to maintain good attendance.

Class Schedule

Registration & Instrument Rental Night	
Wednesday, September 20, drop in between 4:00-7:00 p.m. in the Mason Cafeteria	
First Week Start-Up Lessons*	
Trumpet, Violin and Viola	Monday, Sept. 25
Flute and Cello	Tuesday, Sept. 26
Clarinet and Bass	Wednesday, Sept. 27
Trombone	Thursday, Sept. 28
Makeup/Extra help (any instrument)	Friday, Sept. 29
Regular Schedule beginning Monday, October 2*	
Jefferson and Lowell	Mondays and Wednesdays
Sherman and Washington	Tuesdays and Thursdays
*All classes are from 8:05 to 8:45 a.m.	

*Elementary band/orchestra does not meet on
Early Release, Late-Start, or ES/MS Conference Days.
Classes are cancelled on all late start days due to inclement weather.*

Materials List

- A flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, violin, viola or cello in good working condition.
- Band:** “Standard of Excellence, book 1” by Bruce Pearson. (for your instrument.)
- Orchestra:** String Explorer, book I (for your instrument)
- 3 sharpened no. 2 pencils.
- Instrument specific accessories and cleaning supplies, listed below:

Flute

- Cleaning rod
- swab
- Polishing cloth

Clarinet

- Strength 2 reeds – min. of 3
- Reed guard
- Cleaning swab
- Cleaning cloth
- Cork grease

Trumpet

- Valve oil
- Cleaning brushes and snake
- Slide grease
- Polishing cloth

Trombone

- Slide Oil
- Cleaning brushes and snake
- Slide grease
- Polishing cloth

Stringed Instruments

- Cleaning cloth (a piece of t-shirt is fine)
- Rosin
- Shoulder rest or shoulder sponge from a music store **(Violin and Viola only)**
- Rock stop for home practice **(cello only)**

Cleaning kits usually contain most of the maintenance supplies listed above.

Recommended Materials

- A wire music stand for home practice
- An inexpensive electronic metronome for home practice.

Where do we go to get an instrument and supplies?

Where you buy or rent is your decision. Our concern is that you are informed in your decision making process and that you get the greatest value and service for your dollar. We do not recommend purchasing a new instrument from any store that does not specialize in musical instruments. The following stores are closest to Mason.

<p>Ted Brown Music 6228 Tacoma Mall Blvd Tacoma, WA 98409 www.tedbrownmusic.com 253-272-3211</p>	<p>Lakewood Music & Arts 6111 Lakewood Towne Center Blvd. #Q Lakewood, WA 98499 www.musicarts.com (253) 581-2926</p>	<p>Applebaum Violin Shop 1948 Pacific Ave Tacoma, WA 98402 www.appleaumviolin.com 253-272-4754</p>
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Contact Information

Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Trombone	Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass
<p>Karl Ronning Band Teacher Mason Middle School kronnin@tacoma.k12.wa.us (253) 571-7035</p>	<p>Michael Banet Orchestra Teacher Mason Middle School mbanet@tacoma.k12.wa.us (253) 571-7036</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

What if my child eats breakfast at school?

Kids can eat breakfast at Mason. The lunch number they use at their elementary school will work just fine. Breakfast is served at 7:45.

How much does it cost?

There are no participation fees. Classes are free. The only costs involved are for renting instruments and purchasing the necessary materials. There is a scholarship program for students with free/reduced lunch to rent an instrument from the school district for \$45 annually.

How does my child get back to their elementary school?

Students are escorted to shuttle buses that will take Jefferson, Lowell, Sherman, and Washington students back to their elementary school after band class.

If I choose to purchase an instrument on my own, which brands are best?

Instruments come in many different shapes, sizes, colors, and prices. REMEMBER: You get what you pay for. We recommend that your students play on an instrument that will give them the best opportunity for success. Brand new instruments listed for under \$400 are not a good choice.

Due to our past experience, we recommend certain brands of instruments over others, knowing they will function properly from the start, last a long time, hold their value better, and are easier to repair. Name brand instruments we recommend:

Armstrong
 Bach
 Bundy

Gemienhart
 Jupiter
 King

Selmer
 Yamaha
 Conn

Eastman
 Knilling

Your best option is to discuss the instrument and brand with your teacher if you are not sure.

Are there instruments we should not purchase?

Yes. Not all instruments are created equal. In fact, there are many out there that look nice and shiny, but are not made to last. They are made to sell. A clarinet for \$100 is not a clarinet. It is what we call a clarinet shaped object. You should think twice about purchasing any new instrument listed under \$400.

Is it safe to purchase an instrument off the Internet?

Unless you know exactly what you are buying and whom you are buying from, I would hesitate to purchase off the internet. There are many ways to buy instruments online, however you are not going to receive any service with your purchase. What you need now is a place that will provide service for you and your child's instrument. It is very frustrating for a child to play an instrument that does not work. It is also frustrating for a parent to deal with an unknown music dealer or private owner. Please use caution if you choose to go in this direction.

If you do plan to buy, please remember...

Purchasing a musical instrument is an investment. You must think about it as if you were buying a car. Would you go out and look for the cheapest car you could find or are you going to look for something that will be dependable for years to come? Do not let price dictate the investment you make.

Keys to Success: Enhancing Your Child's Musical Experience

Be involved. Show support. Provide structure. Many parents who do not have a musical background feel they can't help their child in their new endeavor, but your guidance and involvement is essential. These guidelines are designed to help you in giving your child the best support possible.

You can help by:

- Scheduling a consistent, daily time for practice. Music achievement requires effort over time.
- Providing a quiet place in which to practice, complete with a chair and stand.
- Remaining nearby during practice times as often as possible.
- Praising your child's efforts and achievements.
- Providing private lessons- although they are not required, private music lessons, taught by an expert on your child's instrument are highly recommended. They are good for both the student who needs extra help and the students who want to advance more rapidly. We have information available for many private teachers.

What to do as they develop:

- Try to get your child to make a minimum two-year commitment to his/her musical studies.
- Make sure your child's instrument is always in good working order.
- Encourage your child to play for family and friends.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including concerts and recitals.
- Allow your child to play many types of music, not just pieces from the lesson book.

What Not To Do:

- Don't use practice as a punishment.
- Don't start your child on an instrument that's in poor working order or condition.
- Don't compare your child's playing to others. Everyone develops at a different rate.
- Don't make fun of mistakes or less than perfect playing.
- If you see your child losing interest in their music studies, don't panic!
- Discuss the situation with your child to determine why their interest is declining. Many times it may have nothing to do with music. Playing a musical instrument can be challenging at times and will require some effort. Talk to your child's band/orchestra teacher and/or private teacher about renewing their enthusiasm.
- Encourage your child to stick with it for the agreed period of time. If children know they don't have a parental "out" they are much more likely to stay on track.