

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BEGINNING BAND AT FORESTBROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL

1. *My child cannot read music or play an instrument; can he still join band?*

Yes! This class is for the absolute beginner. Students will be taught how to read music and play an instrument.

2. *My child is not 100% certain about his instrument choice at this time. What should we do?*

Since band classes are scheduled by instrument (flutes & clarinets together, trumpets and trombones together), students need to declare a choice at this time. I tell students to choose the instrument they are drawn to. If they change their mind over the summer, email me and I'll get them changed to the correct class. I will also do some testing/advising as to instrument choice during the first two weeks of school.

3. *Does the band class meet during school or after school? Is there a summer class?*

The band class meets every day during the regular school year. There are no after-school requirements or summer classes.

4. *If my child is in band, will he be able to take other exploratory courses (PE, Art, Computer Apps, etc.)?*

Yes. Students will have the opportunity to take 2 other exploratory courses during the year besides band.

5. *If my child is in band, can he also be in chorus or orchestra?*

No. Due to scheduling issues, students may participate in only one music performance group.

6. *If my child is in band, will he be able to participate in extra-curricular activities at FMS?*

Yes. Since the band class meets during the regular school day, students are free to participate in after-school activities such as cheerleading, football, basketball, baseball, Mock Trial, Archery, Robotics, etc.

7. *May a student join the band in the 7th or 8th grade?*

No. Students wishing to enter the band program at FMS must begin in the 1st semester of 6th grade.

8. *What instrument can my child learn to play in beginning band?*

All beginning band students will start on one of the following: flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone.

9. *What about the saxophone or the drums? Can my child begin on either of those instruments?*

Both the sax and the drums are extremely popular and, for the band's sake, have to be limited in number. All students will begin the year on either flute, clarinet, trumpet, or trombone; auditions for the sax and drums will be held at the end of the 1st semester. Those scoring highest on the auditions will be allowed to switch. The number of students allowed to switch will be based on the overall size and needs of the band. If your child has his sights set on the sax or the drums, I strongly recommend that you participate in an instrument rental program – that way, when it comes time to switch, you can simply return the first instrument and begin renting the second one.

10. *Are parents responsible for providing their child with an instrument? How do I do this? How much will this cost?*

Parents are responsible for providing their child with an instrument. Most of my students obtain their instruments through a "rent to own" program with our chosen instrument dealer. **"Rent to own"** means that your monthly payment (approx. \$34, including insurance) goes towards **ownership**; it also means that you can return the instrument at any time with no further financial obligation as long as your account is up-to-date (no past rent due). I will happily guide you through the process of choosing/renting an instrument next year.

11. *May I rent from a company different than the one FMS recommends, use an instrument I already own, or purchase an instrument outright?* Yes, you may rent an instrument from a company other than our preferred dealer, and yes, you may use a flute, clarinet, trumpet, or trombone that you already own or that belongs to someone you know as long as the instrument is in good condition. As for *purchasing* an instrument right away, I don't recommend it; it's best to wait until your child has been playing the instrument for a while and is certain he's made the correct choice. This being said, many rental programs do offer a 90-days same-as-cash deal for parents who rent initially and then decide they want to purchase outright instead of making payments.

12. *What if my child begins band and later decides that it isn't for him? Will he be able to change to another class?*

What do I do with the instrument I'm renting?

Students who find that band isn't for them may petition the principal and guidance counselor for a schedule change at the end of the first semester. "Rent-to-own" instruments can be returned to the dealer with no further financial obligation.

Still have questions? Contact the band director at jmoore@horrycountyschools.net.