Beginning Band Parent Night

November 4, 2026

Playing the Trombone & Baritone

Mr. Hodges
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Band Website: https://www.ksd140.org/band/beginning-band

Good evening and welcome! Tonight, we hope to give you some insight into your child's music education.

I. Instrument Assembly, Care and Maintenance

A. TROMBONE – Using Slide Cream—Option 1 (Apply once a week)
   1. Take the outer slide off and set it aside so you can apply the cream to the inner slide. Be careful of the outer slide and place it somewhere safe where it will not fall and become dented or deformed. Start with a clean inner slide, use a paper towel or soft cloth to wipe dry.
   2. Take a small amount of slide cream on your fingertip—somewhere around the size of a pea is all you need. **Do not confuse with tuning slide grease.** Apply to the bottom 3 inches (thicker part) of the inner slide stockings. Use thumb and index finger to help spread cream. Remove any excess.
   3. Spray a few times with water (spray water bottle)
   4. Once completed, put the outer slide back on and move it up and down a couple of times.
   5. Keep your spray bottle of water handy and apply a fine mist just before and during playing.
   6. Wipe off any extra cream. As a rule of thumb, if you can see the cream, you've applied too much.

B. TROMBONE – Using Slide Oil—Option 2 (Appy as needed)
   1. Lower the outer slide and apply a few drops of slide oil to the inner slide stockings
   2. Move the slide up and down a few times to help spread the oil and eliminate any "scratchiness"

C. BARITONE – Oiling the Valves
   1. Use valve oil only
   2. Oil the valves one at a time.
   3. Turn the valve clockwise until it "clicks" into position.

D. Cleaning the mouthpiece
    1. The mouthpiece should be cleaned once a week preferably with a trombone/baritone mouthpiece brush. This brush can be purchased anywhere band instruments are sold.
    2. Use only warm water and mild soap. Do not use any type of abrasive cleaners or brushes. DO NOT BOIL!!!

E. Cleaning the inside of the instrument
    1. Those of you who are renting your instrument from Quinlan and Fabish are covered for cleanings. Simply notify the store that you will be sending the instrument in for a clean and flush and they will provide a loaner for your students to use in the interim. Once per year is recommended!

F. Cleaning the outside of the instrument
    1. Keep a clean, lint free towel or rag in your case. Simply wipe down the outside of the trombone or baritone when you are done playing to eliminate any damage to the finish.
    2. Most of you have instruments that have a lacquer finish. Polishing cloths and supplies are available at reputable band instrument dealers like Quinlan and Fabish.

II. Practice Procedures -- *"Only practice on the days you eat."*
Daily practice is essential to attain success on your instrument. Keep track of your practice time on the practice chart in your book. **See instructions on next page for Essential Elements Interactive.**

> Please bear in mind that the greatest obstacle to your child's success is lack of practice. **Be sure to help them *make time* for daily practice (15 to 20 minutes).** At this point, putting their instrument together correctly, making a good sound and being able to identify (read) the notes and rhythms is most important so that they don't get discouraged. Be encouraging and remind them that it's only five notes at this point. If they can spell five letter words like "house" or "store", they have the ability to memorize and perform five notes.

The following is a breakdown of how to practice each day.

1. 3 minutes of mouthpiece buzzing – long tones, sirens, songs

2. 5 minutes of long tones – practice holding each note as long as possible. No Puffy Cheeks. USE A MIRROR! Go for a steady sound with no hiccups

3. 15 minutes (or more) practicing assignment in book
    - Count & Clap
        - Hold each note for its assigned value.
        - Keep steady tempo. Don't speed up or slow down. Have a pencil!

- Sing Notes (chin practice)
  - Sing the note name while moving the slide or valves to the correct position for that note.

- Play
  - Play the exercise until it is perfect. This will not happen overnight. You have all week from the time it is assigned until your band director listens the following week.

III. Listen to the Masters

Nothing beats seeing live music. You can't expect to be a good musician if you don't know what good musicians are supposed to sound like. If you don't have access to professional recordings, performing a YouTube search can allow students to hear outstanding professional musicians performing on their instrument.

Search these names on YouTube followed by the instrument….

Trombone – Joseph Alessi, Charles Vernon, J.J. Johnson, Conrad Herwig, Jim Pugh, Wycliffe Gordon

Baritone/Tuba – Gene Pokorny, Arnold Jacobs, Harvey Phillips, Sam Pilafian, Chuck Daellenbach, David Childs, Oystein Baadsvik

Brass Ensembles – Canadian Brass, Dallas Brass, Synergy Brass, Empire Brass, Jazz at Lincoln Center

U.S. Army Field Band Education Videos
Scan QR Code → Opens a YouTube playlist

SCAN ME

IV. Private Instruction

Regardless of whether your child is having a difficult time or is progressing well, private instruction is the most ideal way to maximize your child's musical development. You should always consult your band director when seeking a private teacher. Be sure to ask questions. Where did the teacher go to music school? How long have they been teaching? What age levels do they currently teach? Does the teacher currently perform professionally? What organizations do they perform with?
These are all valid questions and will be welcomed by any teacher that is worth his or her salt.

V. Music Games and Resources

https://www.ksd140.org/band/music-resources

VI. Conclusion

We hope we have shed some light on the process of what your student is going through during these first steps of their musical journey. Remember, learning to play a musical instrument really is a lifelong endeavor. We never stop growing. Throughout middle school, high school, college and beyond, playing a musical instrument gives your child many unique advantages both academically, socially, and emotionally. Students who learn to play a musical instrument achieve higher test scores than those who don't. Music is truly an international language. It breaks all barriers and expresses that which words cannot. We thank you for supporting your child's music education and look forward to your continued participation in the band program.

Musically yours,

Mr. Hodges

Essential Elements Interactive

Please follow these instructions carefully to create an account and use the practice resources for Essential Elements Interactive (EEi):

1. https://www.essentialelementsinteractive.com/register/DistriBa42
   School: District 140
   Director: Mark Hodges
2. At the "Create Student Account" page, select
   No, I do not have an EEi Student ID
3. Please enter the information required and click Submit.
4. Enter your Book Activation Code. This is located at the bottom of the first page of your Essential Elements band book.

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EEi contains background tracks for all exercises in the Essential Elements book and video tutorial lessons. This is a free resource!