Beginning Band Parent Night

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Learning to play Percussion

Mr. Machamer
emachamer@ksd140.org
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. 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 last 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 the breakdown of the "Practice Path" on how to practice each day.

1. Count the rhythm. Use your pencil to write in the counting. Have a pencil with you at all times!
2. Clap the rhythms and say the counts OUT-LOUD.
    - Hold each note for its assigned value. Don't cheat!
3. Sing (say note names) OUT-LOUD & Touch finger to note on bells.
4. Play the exercise
    - How is your posture?
        - Standing tall
        - Feet about shoulder width apart
        - Bell set, snare drum, or practice pad at belt-buckle height
        - Arm angle: about 90* at elbow
        - Palms face TOWARD the GROUND
        - Body centered in the middle range of your music
        - Music stand centered in the middle range of your music
    - How do you sound?
        - Bell mallets centered over middle of bar.
        - Pure Sounds—no thuds!
5. Play the exercise until it is perfect. This will not happen overnight. When you make mistakes, follow the Practice Path!

You have all week from the time it is assigned until your band director listens to you following week.

II. 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….

Drums – Buddy Rich, Dave Weckl, Mel Lewis, Max Roach, Tommy Igoe, Jazz at Lincoln Center

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

III. 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.

IV. Music Games and Resources

KSD 140 Band - https://www.ksd140.org/band/music-resources

Percussive Arts Society - Everything Percussion - Rudiments / Fundamentals / Exercises
https://pas.org/rudiments/

Vic Firth - All things percussion with video lessons
https://vicfirth.zildjian.com/education/percussion-101.html

V. 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 an 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. Machamer

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.

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

