

Kensington Hall Fifth Grade Band

August 2014

Dear Parents,

Congratulations! You are the parent of a middle school student at the Academy of the Sacred Heart's Kensington Hall! This is an exciting time – filled with many new and wonderful opportunities – in your son's life. One exciting experience of this year begins with your son's decision about which instrument he will play in the Beginning Band. This is a very important decision because it is one that will not only impact your son's life throughout the entire year, but is also, hopefully, the beginning of a lifetime of musical involvement.

Before we can begin, you and your son have an important decision to make: What instrument to play? It is very important that students are excited about the instrument they will play; however, there are some developmental and physical characteristics to consider that will impact how well they will do.

To help your child make an informed decision, he had the opportunity to hear a demonstration of all the instruments offered in the Beginning Band: flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion. Based on what students learned and their individual interests, they will soon have a hands-on opportunity to try the instruments. In the next few days, your child will be able to "play" **two or three** of his favorite instruments. This is called an instrument fitting and is the time when students will be individually evaluated and matched with the instrument they are interested in and **best suited to play**. *Please note students who are interested in playing percussion are required to have piano experience and will need to demonstrate proficiency at reading music in the treble clef.*

After your child has been fitted for an instrument, you will get another letter with information about renting a band instrument. Band instruments typically rent by the month for around \$25 - \$50. If you do not have an instrument, rental can be arranged through any of the local music companies. Although you are free to rent the instrument from the company of your choice, I would like to recommend McCourt's Music in Berkley and Waterford. They have provided excellent service to us in the past and, should your child's instrument need repairs, I can act as the liaison between you and the company (e.g., the service representative picks the instrument up from school and returns it to school when repaired). Use of a school instrument can also be arranged by contacting me directly.

To make the rental process even easier on you, we have arranged to have representatives from McCourt's Music come to ASH on **Monday, September 15, 3:30-5 p.m.** This is very convenient for busy families because McCourt's will be here at the school with all of the equipment your child will need (instrument, book and stand). The representative will also be able to check over an instrument you may already own and determine if it is in playable condition. Please fill out the RSVP sheet and return as soon as possible after your child has been fitted so I can have all the necessary equipment for you. If you are unavailable, you can call them directly and arrange a drop-off time for your child's instrument and book.

Sincerely,

Steve Taylor
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