



West Chester Area School District  
Department of Instrumental Music



First-Year Band Students  
Percussion Instrument Course Expectations

Dear Students and Parents,

Playing an instrument is a valuable and exciting opportunity that can bring a lifetime of enjoyment. With regular practice and attendance at lessons, nearly everyone can be a successful musician. Please read the following list of expectations for first-year students:

- 1) **PRACTICE YOUR INSTRUMENT!!** Nothing is more important to your success than the amount of time you spend practicing. We recommend **TWO HOURS** a **WEEK** of practice. Try to schedule a certain time each day for practicing. Students may be asked to keep track of how much time they practice each day. using a chart provided by the teacher.
- 2) **BE PREPARED FOR YOUR LESSON!!!** In addition to learning the songs that are assigned, each student needs to be on time for his or her lesson, with instrument and book. Some students may need help remembering their instruments on lesson day. Because there is only one lesson each week, each lesson is very important.
- 3) **LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT** - We will start by learning the basics of producing a sound, hand position, and note reading. Once we learn the basics, students are expected to master several rhythmic exercises each week. as well as review any exercises that still need work. By January, students should be familiar with quarter note and eighth note patterns and should have completed several pages in the book. During the second half of the year, we will be working on more complicated rhythms in the book. Students who reach page 19 in the Roy Burns book will be selected to play in the spring concert. First-year students do not play in the winter concert. Students who begin their instrument in fifth grade are expected to SIGNIFICANTLY EXCEED the expectations listed above if they wish to be accepted into the band in sixth grade; they should be able to play up to page 23 or beyond in the Roy Burns book by the end of fifth grade.
- 4) **EVALUATION** - Twice each year, usually in December and in May, students will receive a Band Progress Report. Students are graded on their Attendance, Behavior, Preparedness, Sticking, Rhythm-Reading, and Hand Position. One copy of the report card needs to be signed and returned.

On the back of this paper is a message to parents or guardians, which tells you things that you can do that will help your child, and things that you should NOT do. Please take the time to read those suggestions carefully, because the support of a parent or guardian goes a long way towards helping a student become successful on an instrument.

Below please find a space for the student’s signature and a space for the parent or guardian to sign, indicating that they have read and understand what is expected of them. Thank you for your interest in the band program. I am looking forward to a productive year.

Sincerely,

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Band Director

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Student’s Signature

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Parent/Guardian Signature