

WELCOME!

We are honored to have your interest in our program!

Year after year, McLane continues to be arguably the best music program in the area, for which your young aspiring musician can be very excited.

Please read & share with your son or daughter:

In choosing to join the band, please have an important and open discussion with your child about the commitment they're making. By joining, they are accepting a challenge to themselves to become a musician, a responsible band member, and an accountable young adult.

Being in the band is often hard work, but this also makes it extremely rewarding. Difficulties are expected, and each member will some 'hurdles' to be crossed. These are the moments where your son or daughter will learn the most about themselves and of life lessons. This is what makes band so special.

Lancer Band Members have had access to a long list of opportunities
Just to name a few...

Walt Disney World Magic Music Days
Philadelphia's Boscov's Thanksgiving Day Parade
Cleveland Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Jazz Show
Kennywood's Fall Fantasy Parade
Lakeshore Marching Band Association
Cleveland Tri-C Jazz Festival
PMEA District & Jr. District Band
PMEA District Jazz
Guest Jazz Artists
Holiday Tour of McLane Schools
Jazz Erie Clinic & Concert
Titusville Oil 150 Parade
Edinboro Homecoming Parade

Concerts
Parades
Football Games
Trips & Travel
Parks
Special Opportunities
Performance
Discipline
Scholarships
Lifelong Appreciation
Lifelong Friends
Tradition
Pride

Lakeshore Marching Band Association
CHAMPIONS

2001 - 2002 - 2003 - 2005 - 2007

Basic Information:

SIGN-UPS: Due **ASAP** (turn-in to JWPMs Office)

COST: \$35 Check made to “GM Band Boosters”
FEE is due Friday, January 5th.

This fee covers the use of rented classroom sets of instruments during the 3rd quarter. We will have access to: Clarinets, Flutes, Trumpets, Trombones, Baritones, Bass & Snare Drums, Xylophones, and Hand Percussion instruments. These instruments will stay at the school.

Around March 1, you will need to seek an instrument for your son/daughter for the 4th quarter. Your \$35 fee can be put toward the purchase of a good condition used instrument from Lenz Discount Band Instruments of McKean.

Exploratory Rentals END on Friday, March 19.

**Student NEEDS OWN INSTRUMENT by
Friday, March 25.**

There are many options for acquiring an instrument:

- 1.) **Your rental fee can be put toward the cost of the purchased instrument from our supplier.** These quality used instruments begin at \$150 and are in good condition. New instruments are also available.
- 2.) **Rent-To-Own** Programs are available from World of Music and Lynch Music Inc.
- 3.) **A used instrument for sale by a local family.** Parents often contact me to find a home for their child's 'old' instrument. This can be a good fit for many people. These offers come and go, but if there is anything available I can relay the information to you.
- 4.) **An older instrument that you already have** can be a great way to start, but **WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THE INSTRUMENT WORKS FIRST!** You can't learn properly on a poorly/non-functioning instrument. The school has a very limited number of instruments to 'lend' out to students, so it is VERY important that you contact me with any problems in finding an instrument. The sooner, the better, as we will need to make a plan.

Thoughts To Consider:

Is there a “right” age to beginning an instrument?

There is no ‘right’ age for beginning an instrument, as long as they are able to ‘audiate’. Audiation is the “mind’s ear”, and is our cultivated ability to hear something in our minds before making a sound. It is commonly called “ear training”, and we spend a great deal of time on it during the Exploratory Band.

Decide From The Heart

Being that this may be the first serious commitment your son or daughter has made, they should consider it with care. They must understand what they’re signing up for: It will be hard, but overcoming the difficulty is what makes it special to succeed. They are signing up to learn an instrument, and should expect some difficulty.

Make a Thoughtful Choice

If the instrument choice is not made thoughtfully, great difficulty is inevitable because the choice is either a.) Not physically suited for them, or b.) they lack the motivation. When students have difficulty on an instrument, they are naturally less likely to find their real passion for music, and often do not ‘complete’ the program.

Consider Size & Shape

I will do my best to get them started on their ‘preferred’ instrument, but in some cases, I will likely assess them with stronger potential on another instrument. While a student’s feelings about an instrument are important, sometimes their physical build is geared more for another instrument. This can sometimes be disappointing to hear. Professionally, these decisions are made in the interest of the student’s greatest potential.

Social Growth

As students progress through our program, they realize over time that their input and initiative is what drives their success. Most of the responsibility for learning the instrument is on the shoulders of the student. As our class size of 30+ in a band setting limits personal instruction, learning the discipline of an instrument is almost exclusively a personal experience. Band provides innumerable opportunities for social growth, and as a student organization of this size needs student leadership to be successful, I cultivate attitude of leadership on a daily basis. The best bands are student-driven.

Band vs. Other Classes

While in other classes the students are graded strictly by their own work, in a band setting, the work of each individual reflects on the group as a whole. The "bulk" of the work is done on a personal basis, and the product (or test) is music created by the group. Not only that, but as tests done in math class are not necessarily shared beyond that room, the product of our hard work is played for an audience. This is difficult, but is also what makes it rewarding.

Friends Change.. New Friends are Made!

They should view the learning of an instrument like making a new friend. Often kids quit ONLY because their friend quit, and forfeit the chance to build new friendships. I remain friends with a significant list of people who was in band with, and remain in touch over great distances.

Percussion:

Students MUST try each instrument and participate in band consistently to be considered for PERCUSSION. Unless a student has studied percussion with a private teacher, they will be required to follow through with the same requirements as the other students. The percussion instruments are reserved for the most skilled note-readers, and will wait to select them after they have shown commitment to the band. Also, a student's decorum and maturity will be heavily considered. The student must be able to understand this before taking on what will be significantly more to know and be responsible for.

We often hear people say they want to be a 'drummer', but that is one small slice of a much bigger pie. A common misconception about percussion is that it is simply playing the drum (singular). Unfortunately, it is not limited to the snare drum, and includes a significant list of other instruments. This is the main reason why we have to be selective.

New & Different Instruments

After developing some experience as well as a solid foundation of basic musicianship, students often ask to take on new instruments. As they develop as players, a switch to another instrument as a step up, or 'doubling' and playing both is not uncommon. For instance, a student may start on a trumpet, but develop enough to play a Tuba, or Baritone. Many clarinetists end up also playing the saxophone and flute when seeking to join a jazz-based ensemble. There are many possibilities like this. Most of these "switches" are best made in high school.

Scheduling & Time Management

Many parents often speculate if they are overloading their kids with activities and responsibilities, which occasionally prevents some students from enjoying the fruits of musicianship. Where this concern is based on time-management, through my experience I have found that band membership and instrumental practice are a major factor in learning this very skill. The skills learned as being a part of an ensemble are lifelong, and easily transferable to all aspects of living. I can attest to the rewards of what have been well spent years learning the discipline of being a musician at McLane. I was also an athlete on a travel hockey team, among several other sports, but was also always able to keep a balance. It CAN be done! As far as school functions go, General McLane's scheduling of events allows for students to do both sports and music. It is certainly not an 'easy' thing, but is extremely worth while and character building.

What we'll be doing:

Their time in band will be largely focused on developing good habits of basic musicianship. Posture, preparing to play, note-reading, pitch recognition, fundamentals of feeling and counting rhythm, rhythmic dictation, how to hold each instrument, how to make a sound on each instrument, decorum in a band rehearsal, and the responsibilities of maintaining a clean community space in the band room.

It is not magic, and they must practice to get better.

One MAJOR key to your child's success is developing a consistent and effective practice routine at HOME. Little bits over a long period of time. Your involvement is VERY important. Setting goals is a part of our rehearsals, while the most important part of following through with those goals takes place at home.

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 22	Informational Meeting
December 23	SIGN-UPS DUE!
<u>January 5</u>	<u>\$35 Due to "GM Band Boosters"</u>
January 17	Start of 3rd QTR + Exploratory Band Begins
March 1	Begin seeking child's instrument
March 17	Exploratory Rentals ENDS
<u>March 25</u>	<u>Students need OWN INSTRUMENT</u>
March 28	Start of 4th QTR with own instrument
May	Scheduling for NEXT YEAR
June 8	Student's Last Day



 Exploratory Band Informational Meeting, December 22, 2010, 7:00pm

**Please return this sheet ASAP:
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
To the JWPMS Office.**

Child's Name: _____

Parents' Name(s) _____ 

Parent Contact #'s (home) _____

(daytime/cell) _____