

St. Albert's Band Basic Information Sheet 2019

Dear Parents,

I am very excited to be teaching at St. Albert's. I am also looking forward to taking the band program in a new direction and I am hopeful that your child gets involved! I have taken pride in building strong band programs over the years and I am very optimistic that in due time, the St. Albert's Band Program will be one that everyone looks up to. Over the years, many of my students have continued playing through high school and into college. Some of my students have played with the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, a few have gone on to become music teachers and I am proud to say that I have former students who are professional musicians and have traveled the world. Recently, I was the conductor of the Archdiocesan Honor Band and I am the founder and director of the Jenkintown Community Band. I also direct at St. Luke's School where I am proud to say that I have consistently sent more students to participate in the Archdiocesan Honor Band Program than any other school. I am also the band director at St. Basil Academy. As a professional trumpet player, I freelance with orchestras in the tristate area. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from the Peabody Conservatory of Music/ Johns Hopkins and a Master's degree in Trumpet Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music in MA. Whatever levels your child progresses to, playing an instrument and learning how to read music has been proven to stimulate the mind in ways that significantly help with learning in other areas. What your child learns over the next few years in regards to reading music and playing an instrument, will stick with them for a long time to come.

Band Instrumental lessons are offered to grades 4th - 8th. The instrumental lessons that I offer are for flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone and percussion.

Drum lessons need to be arranged with a private teacher outside of school. As the percussion student advances and wants to move to the drum set, lessons have to be one on one. This gives the percussion student the best chance to succeed during band rehearsals and concerts.

In order to participate in the band program, your child must be enrolled for lessons at St. Albert's or with a private instructor on a weekly basis. Group lessons will be provided during the school day. The length of the lessons will be 30 minutes long and will be held once a week. The schedule is rotational so that the classes that are missed vary from week to week.

Band rehearsal schedule:

Tuesday afternoons

Concert Band (grades 5-8) 3-4:00 PM

Beginner Band - brief reh w/ the concert band/ end of Nov. 2:30-3:00.

Jazz Band - open to grades 6th and up. Rehearsals 4-4:30. Starting date TBD

Making a decision about what instrument to choose can be difficult. **I would suggest that your child make a choice based on the sound of the instrument that they like best.**

TURN OVER.....

Instrumental Rental:

I will have rental forms available for Loser's Music, they are a wonderful business that I have used over the past 15 years. Loser's will deliver the instruments to the school and pick them up if they are ever in need of repair. Another thing that is great about Loser's is that they leave a loaner instrument for the student to use while their instrument is in for repair. I am running low on forms for Loser's, but you can rent by going to their website, www.losersmusic.com. There are plenty of other options as well, including Music and Arts located in Willow Grove.

Purchasing an instrument:

If you are going to buy an instrument, it is usually better to purchase a used instrument with a small dent or two of a proven brand, such as a Yamaha, Bach, Conn, Selmer, King, Jupiter etc... Often, instruments that are purchased on eBay or Craigslist need to have a bit of work done to them, especially if they are woodwind instruments.

**Always beware of cheaper instruments that are brand new. One disadvantage to buying an instrument, is that you can't return or exchange the instrument you purchased for a different one if it doesn't work out for your child. For example, if you are renting a trumpet, and your child *really struggles* on the trumpet, the rental company will allow you to switch the trumpet for another instrument. Once you buy an instrument, you are stuck with it.

Note about band fees:

The fees for my program cover lessons, rehearsals, special trips and concerts. The instructional portion of the fees comes to about \$15.00 per lesson which is about half of the cost of a private lesson outside of school. This comes to a total of \$450.00 for the school year. An additional fee of \$200.00 is also applied for the band rehearsal time and everything else that fits into my job description. There are many other costs as well, for example, each piece of music that I have to purchase cost about \$75.00. There are also many hidden hours for me behind the scenes to move equipment, set up and break down rehearsals, organize events, and prepare parts for students. **I am a private contractor therefore, I am not paid from St. Alberts in any way.** A 10% discount is offered to parents who have multiple children in the program. If the fee is a financial burden for you, I do not want to exclude anyone from my program, please contact me to work out a solution. I now take Venmo at alexschmauk@gmail.com

Book:

Essential Elements 2000...This book along with a stand can be obtained along with renting an instrumental from Loser's Music

Christmas Concert... Dec. 18th 7:00 PM St. Basil Academy

(This concert will be shared with Jenkintown Community Band)

How to get started:

- 1. Fill out a contract for each child involved and attach a check for the first payment & send into school***
- 2. Fill out rental form from Loser's Music or from any music store. I will have rental forms for Loser's at school.***
- 3. Wait for the lesson schedule to come out.***

