

Georges P. Vanier Junior High Music Program

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Beginner Band (Grade 6) at GPVanier

Hello! Welcome to band! As the new music director at Georges P Vanier, allow me to introduce myself. I am a twenty-five year music education specialist who spent 10 incredible years at A.J. Smeltzer Junior High, along with its feeder schools, where our musicians performed locally, provincially and were invited to MusicFest Canada a number of times. During my 15 wonderful years at Auburn Drive High School, the program was expanded to include vocal music, and drumline; our jazz ensemble performed not only at MusicFest Canada by invitation, but at the Atlantic Jazz Festival, as well. Once things get rolling at GPV, I hope to expand our program to include other ensembles to broaden our young musicians' musical experiences.

**MUSIC IS A MORE
POTENT INSTRUMENT
THAN ANY OTHER
FOR EDUCATION**

Why Band?

Instrumental Music is an exciting opportunity for students to not only learn how to make great music, but develop teamwork, cooperation, dedication, and perseverance at the same time. Through learning a band instrument, students move from the basic skills of elementary music and grow towards the authentic experience of a professional musician.

Focus:

All components contributing toward proficient performance skills such as proper breathing, posture, tone, dynamics, rhythmic + melodic accuracy, intonation, balance, phrasing, articulation, critical listening. Students will perform as both a soloist and as a member of an ensemble - and have fun while doing so!

Instruments

Families are responsible for renting an instrument. There are a number of stores who do so in HRM. Please see the slideshow on the Georges P. Vanier website to review the options, hear what the instruments sound like, and a few tips for instrument selection (such as very short arms + trombone = difficulty).

Please indicate your child's top 2 choices to play when you register for Georges P. Vanier in February. Options for grade 6 band are:

- Euphonium
- Trombone
- Trumpet
- Clarinet
- Flute
- Percussion (if your student has piano background)

"In terms of brain development, musical performance is every bit as important educationally as reading or writing."

— Oliver Sacks

All students should have the opportunity to join band! If your family is not in a place to rent an instrument, the school does have a few instruments that we can provide. Options are limited.

We also have some of the larger instruments that would be more expensive (tubas, etc) that we can rent.

Informing Parent/Guardians

Preferred method of contact is through email (FergusonM@hrce.ca), and is the best method for parents/guardians to ask questions or seek clarification.

Materials Needed:

Students are responsible for

- bringing their own materials to class when we have band (listed below*)
- individual practice once we start playing: aim for 20 - 30 minutes per day x 5 days per week
- asking for assistance when needed

*Necessary materials for band class (please let me know if there are any issues acquiring any of the following):

- Working, well-maintained instrument (purchased or rented)
- Instrument accessories - depending on instrument that is selected (a list will be provided when notified which instrument your young musician will be playing)
- 1" or 1.5" Binder with 4 dividers labelled Warm Ups, Music, Theory, Other
- Pencil(s), eraser
- Standard of Excellence* Book 1

How Will I Know What Instrument My Musician Will be Playing?

Students will bring home an information package listing the instrument they will be playing.

Joining Band is a Family Commitment:

- ★ Students need your help, patience, reminders, and support.
You will help determine if your young musician will succeed - by how much time they invest learning their notes, fingerings, and practicing.
- ★ When students join band, they will be in band for the full year 😊.(No quitting part way through) This is to ensure that they give it their all, and get to enjoy all the benefits.
- ★ There will be an AMAZING band camp at the beginning of the school year on a Saturday where we will hold our FIRST CONCERT!

I am genuinely looking forward to sharing the wonderful world of Concert Band with your children. The opportunity to take band is one that has had a positive influence on many students for generations in this community. I hope all students will try it for at least one year to see if it is something that will not only interest them, but enhance their education, as well.

Sincerely,

*Ms. Meg Ferguson
Band Director
Georges P. Vanier Junior High School*

