

WESTLAKE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

2014-2015 BEGINNING BAND PROGRAM

Mrs. Karen Kurtz, Director
KKurtz@WestlakeChristian.org



Course Description:

Beginning Band is for students in grade 4 or higher who are new to instrumental music or students learning to perform on a secondary instrument. The prerequisite for this class is passing the Music Aptitude Test and being successfully placed on a band instrument. I ask for a one year commitment to Beginning Band unless we find that the instrument selected is not suitable for the student.

Band Director: Mrs. Karen Kurtz

The best way to contact the director is via email: KKurtz@WestlakeChristian.org

Director's school hours:

Mondays	7:30 a.m.	–	10:30 a.m.
Tuesdays	7:30 a.m.	–	3:35 p.m.
Wednesdays	7:30 a.m.	–	3:35 p.m.
Thursdays	7:30 a.m.	–	12 noon

Band Schedule:

- Beginning Band students start with weekly group lessons 30 minutes in length once instruments are delivered in the fall. The lessons may be scheduled in the mornings Monday-Thursday or on Tuesday & Wednesday during school hours. It takes approximately 2-3 weeks for a consistent lesson schedule to be set up for all instrumental students in 4th-8th grade enrolled in band. WCA students are taken out of class for their weekly lesson. Students are expected to make up work missed during lessons. The classroom teacher and I monitor band student's progress to make sure that a student is able to maintain grade level in the class that the child misses for band. Band lessons take place in the band office next to the gym.
- Full band rehearsals will be held weekly on Wednesday mornings from 8:15 – 9:05 a.m. in the gym beginning in mid-October. Students must arrive in time to be in their seat –with their instrument out and ready to play by 8:20 a.m. If Concert Band is still rehearsing as students arrive, they are to wait in the gym and observe the end of the rehearsal.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Definition -Present: Student in seat having instrument assembled and music on the stand ready to play at 8:20 a.m. The director recommends you arrive at the school at 8:15 a.m. to allow the student ample time to be prepared. Walking into the gym at 8:20 for band is considered "tardy".

♫ **Concerts:** Attendance at concerts is mandatory except for extreme illness, death in the family, or engagements of long standing where the band director has been given advance notice in writing -- twelve (12) weeks in advance for programs listed on the school & music department calendar, ten (10) days or more for programs not listed on the school calendar & music department calendar.

Band students must be seated in time for the warm-up and tuning session before performances. Students not arriving in time to be warmed up and tuned with their respective band may or may not be allowed to perform at the discretion of the director. Parents anticipating a problem getting their child to the performance area

on time need to notify the band director so that transportation arrangements can be made in advance.

♪ **Rehearsals Two Weeks Prior to Concerts:** Additional rehearsals, i.e. dress rehearsals are scheduled in the weeks before the concert, especially for Beginning Band. The director will hand out a departmental calendar listing those rehearsals. Students missing rehearsals the week before, or the week of a concert may not be permitted to perform. Students who have been extremely ill or have had a death in the family may be allowed to perform after their readiness to perform has been evaluated by the director. Although it may be difficult, vacation times should not be scheduled during concert times, if a student expects to be in the school band program.

(NOTE: *The director DOES NOT conduct band rehearsals on a performance day.*)

♪ **Class and Lesson Attendance:** Attendance at lessons and rehearsals is mandatory. If a student is well-enough to be at school, they are expected to participate in band. The parent is to contact the director via email at kkurtz@WestlakeChristian.org if a student is absent from band rehearsal or lessons. Students who miss rehearsals or lessons without notification from the parent will receive a zero for the missed class.

Practice Requirements:

Practice outside of school instructional time is critical to the growth and success of all music students! Students will find a practice journal inside their band book to record daily practice or may use the Home Practice Record form at the end of this document. During the first month of lessons, students will practice a minimum of 15 minutes per day, 5 days per week. We will build up strength to be able to practice 30 minutes 5 days per week by February. The director will note in the student's lesson book the when the number of minutes changes. Students are welcome to practice more than the required amount once sufficient lip/hand strength is built up. The Beginning Band concert requires that students be able to perform for 30 minutes without undue fatigue.

- Starting with the first lesson, students will be required to fill out the practice record in ink and have a parent initial the practice record weekly. The director will give a letter grade based on the practice record. (5 days per week receives an "A"; 4 days per week a "B", etc.) Students will receive a band grade on their report card.
- When band rehearsals start, students will also receive a weekly grade for rehearsals.
- **Parents:** If a student says "I don't have anything to practice," please look in their lesson book and point out the page numbers and lines that have been either circled & dated; dated; or check-marked. If a page number or line has a "/" through it or a sticker, the student has passed that line or page. Occasionally I will put a "?" or note "If you can" on a page or section. That means that if the student has time and is looking for a greater challenge, they can go onto that page or section.
- Parents are to note on the practice record if there are special situations that hinder a student's ability to practice, i.e., illness, travel, dental/orthodontic work. If a student is having difficulty completing homework and meeting practice requirements, please contact the director as soon as possible.
- Students occasionally tell me that they were "too busy" to practice. Often the "too busy" is because a student is involved in many different types of activities outside of school. It is important to remember that regular, consistent practice time is the key to success in any musical endeavor.
- Students not having a practice record two weeks in a row, or lacking a parent's signature will receive a "Zero" and may not receive a lesson.

Grades:

There are three keys to success in any band program.

- Daily practice, which is 50% of the band grade.
- Attendance & participation in group lessons and band rehearsals. Students who arrive late for school and receive an "unexcused" tardy slip from the office will have a minimum 3 point deduction from the band rehearsal grade.

Beginning Band students are allowed one free “forget” per semester from a band rehearsal or a lesson, whether that involves forgetting their instrument, their band music, or both on a band or lesson day. After the student has used that grace, a “0” will be added as a multiplier in the weekly band grade. Please understand that when a student “forgets” or is late on a band day, the absence or tardiness affects the entire band as we cannot “make up” the rehearsal. When a student “forgets” on a lesson day, the entire week’s instruction is missed and this puts the student behind the rest of the band in skills learned. (In the case of excused absence from lessons, I will do what I can to reschedule the lesson on another day in that week if possible.)

Students practicing two (2) times or less per week will receive a “D” or an “F” for the week and may not receive a lesson. Students who persist in not practicing may be dropped from the program after a conference with the parent.

Primary Texts Used in the First Year:

Standard of Excellence Book 1 – Comprehensive Band Method by Bruce Pearson, Kjos Music.

All Beginning Band students must have this book. At times, the cost is included in rental of the band instrument – enhanced version with CD’s approx. \$9.95.

- The (Name of Instrument) Student, Level 1 (Elementary), By Weber/Various Authors, Belwin. (This book is used by some students in the spring.) Price: approx. \$7.99
- Elementary Drum Method, by Roy Burns, Belwin Music. (Purchased in the second semester by all percussion students.) Price: \$10.99
- Pottag-Hovey Method for French Horn, by Max Pottag & Nilo Hovey. (Purchased in the first quarter by all French horn students.) Price: approx. (\$9.50)
- Students may also purchase the above books through the director.

Band Music:

Band music is owned by Westlake Christian Academy and handed out to students in preparation for the Beginning Band concert. Band music is purchased through the general fund of Westlake Christian Academy and supporters of the music program. As with textbooks in the classroom, students are responsible for keeping school owned music in good condition. Students are provided band folders to assist in keeping their music in good condition. If music is lost or damaged is there a replacement fee based on the current replacement price of the music, including shipping.

Instrument Repairs/Maintenance:

Rentals through Quinlan & Fabish

- Students renting instruments through Quinlan & Fabish Music are required to have the instrument maintenance agreement offered by the store during the rental period. This avoids additional cost to the family for service during the rental period. If an instrument is not in working condition, the director will contact the store to have the instrument serviced and a loaner provided to the student.

Privately Owned

- Students having instruments owned by the family will be responsible for having the instrument serviced and also obtaining a loaner instrument so that instruction can continue.
- It is recommended that all privately owned woodwind instruments and trombones be serviced at least one time per year, preferably during the summer months when school is not in session. Many woodwinds and trombones require a second servicing, depending on the instrument and its use.

Rentals through any other Vendor

- Please make sure that rentals from vendors other than Quinlan & Fabish also have a maintenance agreement to provide service at no extra cost to the parent. If the student or I have determined that the instrument is not working properly, the parent will be responsible for delivering the instrument to the store and getting a loaner instrument.

School Owned

- Repair & maintenance of school owned instruments will be handled by the director. Students will be taught basic maintenance procedure of the instrument. Loss or damage above what is considered normal for school use will be the responsibility of the parent.

Instrument Supplies:

- Rental instruments generally come with initial supplies (reeds, valve oil, swabs) needed to start instruction. The director also keeps a supply of these items available for purchase at school.

Insurance

School-owned instruments are insured under the school's insurance policy.

Privately owned instruments must be insured under the parent's homeowner's policy. If your child's instrument is valued over \$300.00, it would be a good idea to check your insurance policy to see how much coverage is offered for musical instruments.

NOTE:

- Students "forgetting" privately owned instruments at school over night or during weekends and holidays need to remember that their instruments are not covered by school insurance against damage, theft, or fire.
- Any instrument left at school indicates that the student was not able to practice and band grades will be affected. It is important that students take their instruments HOME at night.

Beginning Band Concert:

The concert is most often the second or third Tuesday of May. Please do not plan a vacation from mid-April to mid-May as we will need all students at rehearsals and lessons

Participating in the Beginning Band concert is a requirement of the program. It is the culmination of their first year on their instrument and is a memorable event. Refreshments will be served afterward.

Band Fees:

The price of band fees for full time WCA students and home school students are set by the Board of Trustees annually. There is tuition assistance available for full time WCA students who qualify. Please contact Mrs. Kurtz for further information.

- WCA Students: \$112.50 per year / \$12.50 per month (Sept.-May) for the first student in the family. \$90.00 per year / \$10 per month for every student thereafter.
- Homeschool students: \$337.50 per year / \$37.50 per month (Sept. – May) for the first band student in the family. \$306.00 per year / \$34 per month for every student thereafter.

WESTLAKE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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www.WestlakeChristian.org



WCA BAND HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I agree to support the rules and guidelines presented in the WCA Band Handbook AND agree to the following rules:

- Attend all scheduled rehearsals and lessons
- Practice faithfully
- Attend all concerts
- Maintain my appearance, as outlined in the WCA Student and Band Handbooks
- Will care for equipment and/or music or will be responsible for repair or replacement

Student Signature

Date

PARENT AGREEMENT:

I have received and agree to support the WCA Band Syllabus with my student. By signing this agreement, I accept ALL the rules and guidelines contained in the syllabus, most specifically the following:

Student attendance at the concert is mandatory for Beginning Band.

- Initial the Home Practice Record to be turned in at each weekly lesson, when my child completes his/her practice, as appropriate for grade/band level per the syllabus.
- Understand because band is a performance-based, graded; curricular class that grades are based on *practice, attendance, performance* of the assigned music, and student's *attitude*.
- Support the Administration and Director by ensuring that my child maintains his/her appearance, as outlined in the WCA Student Handbooks.
- Pay fees for band, music books and instrument supplies in a timely and consistent manner.
- Maintain the appropriate insurance coverage for school and privately owned instruments.

Please share any special information about your child that will help us to better meet his/her needs. This information will be kept confidential. (Feel free to use the reverse of this form.)

Parent Signature

Date