

# 4th Grade Beginning Percussion Ensemble

## 2020-2021 Invitation and Welcome Packet!

Dear Parents / Guardians,

Welcome to 4<sup>th</sup> grade percussion ensemble! **I've created this ensemble so that 4th grade students could participate in a safe/socially distant performance ensemble and prepare for a beginning band class.** This ensemble aims to promote musical growth in order to prepare for our 5th grade band program. This OPTIONAL class is open to everyone in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, regardless of experience with instruments.

This year will without a doubt be different from years past. The Band Program in the West Boylston Music Department aims to offer students the opportunity to study music in a performance setting. We will utilize a number of strategies including online learning, SmartMusic, and in-person rehearsing (with safe socially distancing). I am determined to help students gain an outlet for expression and a way to learn an instrument.

### Register for Percussion Ensemble!

If you would like to register for 4th grade percussion ensemble this year, please follow the link below and fill out the brief registration form for band.

[4th Grade Beginning Percussion Ensemble Registration](#)

### Students will need...

- one (1) pair concert snare drum sticks (5A, 2BN or similar)
- one (1) snare drum practice pad

You are welcome to get this material from any vendor/company you like. We recommend David French Music Company. Their website is [David French Music](#) as we have worked with them for over 25 years and they can deliver directly to the school!

**Director's Note:** If you are unable to acquire any of these items for any reason whatsoever (monetary issue, accessibility, etc.), please feel free to email me ([brianstefanelli@wbschools.com](mailto:brianstefanelli@wbschools.com)) and we will find a solution together. **No child will be turned away from band.**

## **Bi-Weekly Meeting Schedule**

Percussion ensemble will meet once every other week (bi-weekly). I will hold meetings/rehearsals for beginning percussionists last period during your cohort's special time. During these rehearsals we will play a variety of school percussion instruments (using our own sticks). Percussionists will learn about bell/keyboard instruments and struck/battery percussion. We will not learn drumset in this ensemble. Meeting groups and times will be sent out once the ensemble numbers are finalized. Activities will be assigned throughout the week.

## **SmartMusic Computer Program**

Every percussion student will have access to their own SmartMusic account that they will use throughout the year. With SmartMusic students will be able to do the following:

- Look through a variety of FREE music that will appear on your computer screen
- Access a method book
- Listen to the method books songs played by your instrument
- Play along with a background track for many exercises
- Record yourself playing along with the file
- Get INSTANT feedback on what notes and rhythms were played correctly

Information and video instruction on setting up your SmartMusic account will be sent to students who register for band.

## **Creating a Practice Schedule**

Students will be asked to practice material at home. Students should talk to parents and family members about good practice times and places. I would strongly suggest that students and parents discuss a routine time and place to practice a few times a week. Consistent schedules will help students develop strong practice habits and skills. I would expect a 4th grade percussion student to practice 10 minutes, 2-3 days a week. An example practice schedule would be MWF 3:30-3:40pm.

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Thank you for your continued support of our music program. Please contact me with any questions or concerns,

Brian Stefanelli

Band Director

Music Program Leader

West Boylston Public Schools

[brianstefanelli@wbschools.com](mailto:brianstefanelli@wbschools.com)