

**CARL BEN EIELSON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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Fargo, ND 58103

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www.fargo.k12.nd.us/cbeBrad Franklin, *Principal* • 701.446.1704Brian Marcus, *Assistant Principal* • 701.446.1706Mariah McKenney, *Assistant Principal* • 701.446.1707

Dear CBE Middle School 6th Grade Band Members and Parents,

The 2024-2025 school year is quickly approaching and we hope you are excited about starting your band instrument soon! Being in a middle school band is a new experience that is very different from most anything you have ever done. It may be somewhat familiar to other activities you've experienced in that it requires the same level of teamwork as a sport but, at the same time, there will be academic expectations since it is a graded class. Add a lot of fun making good music, new and old friends to join in, and you've got a lot to look forward to!

Do students need instruments on the 1st day of school?

Yes. All students will need an instrument starting on **Wednesday, August 28th**. It is very important that the instrument and supplies be taken care of **before** this date in order to fully participate and be successful.

What steps should we take in order to be ready for band class?

At the end of this letter, there is an instrument & supplies list. Our local music stores can help you with all of the instruments and supplies you need. They have risk-free, affordable plans to make it easier to get started. **If you do not already have an instrument, this is the recommended way of getting a band instrument.** The stores can set up the paperwork for you now and will deliver the instruments, supplies, and books to CBE by school start (monthly payments would start after instruments are delivered). Our local music stores are Schmitt Music (4101 13th Ave S in Fargo) or Eckroth Music (1620 32nd Ave S in Fargo).

Can we use an instrument from the school?

The school has a very limited supply of instruments designated for students with financial hardships. If financial hardship is an issue, please keep your child enrolled and email or leave a phone message for Mrs. Quist (quistn@fargoschools.org 701-446-1781) or Mr. Homuth (homuthi@fargoschools.org 701-446-1782) as soon as possible.

Please note – We do not have any saxophones or oboes available for rent/financial hardships/any other issues.

What if my child is playing bassoon, French horn, Euphonium (baritone), or Tuba?

If your son/daughter is planning on playing bassoon, french horn, euphonium (baritone), or tuba, your student can rent these instruments through the school. Carl Ben Eielson should have enough instruments to accommodate registered students on those instruments. Contracts will be issued the first week of school. The rental fee for the year is \$120 or \$60 per semester (contact us in the event of financial hardships). Each family will be responsible for the books and supplies associated with these instruments.

What if we already have a used instrument?

If you own (or plan to purchase/borrow) a used instrument, we **strongly** encourage you to have it checked over by a licensed repair person in the next couple of weeks so that it will be in good playing condition on the first days of school. Our local music stores have repair shops that can help you through this process. It's very frustrating for students to try and learn a new instrument when the instrument itself doesn't work.

Amazon, Ebay, Sam's Club, Craigslist, etc have new instruments for much cheaper than the stores....is it ok to get an instrument that way?

It is extremely risky to purchase an instrument on Amazon (and other websites) for a number of reasons:

1. The instruments being manufactured by off-brand companies often cannot be repaired if anything goes wrong. The music repair stores won't touch them for concern that even more will break. It's not a good deal if you buy a trumpet for \$150, only to find out it's actually a disposable one that lasts for just a few months...even though they may look pretty and have gimmick "extras" (white gloves, bright colors...and if an instrument comes with a screwdriver there may be a reason for doing so). Many of our previous families have not had good experiences with what they purchased. In some cases, instruments were unable to be repaired or just did not play well.
2. There have been an increasing number of forgeries on brands we would consider "recommended" on these websites. An example would be instruments stamped with Yamaha but the logo isn't quite right. This is something the average consumer would not know about, but our local music stores can avoid.
3. If an instrument doesn't work out and you've paid upfront for it, any money paid is generally gone. With the plan the music stores have, the customer only pays for the months their child uses the instrument (and each of these monthly payments are subtracted from the purchase price at 0% interest). Additionally, if they need to switch to a different instrument, all of the payments already made go toward the new instrument (up to one year). It's a very safe way to make sure that you're only paying for what your child will use.
4. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is....

Could we get the instrument early to get a head start?

We ask you and your child to **wait** on any assembly until his/her band teacher has explained the process in class. Putting together the instruments without instruction can (and often does) result in bent keys, broken reeds, etc.

Do percussion students need to purchase an instrument?

Yes. Students need a percussion kit (practice pad, bell set, stand, and sticks/mallets). These can also be purchased at our local music stores like other instruments. In addition, a \$25 fee will be assessed for each FPS percussion student for use of school percussion equipment and mallets for the year.

Ready for Band Checklist:

- o Instrument
- o Supplies (listed on next page)
- o Nametag on the instrument for identification
- o Pencil(s) that will stay in the case.
- o A music stand for at home practice is recommended.
- o Tradition of Excellence, Book One.

***Please note: Percussion students should purchase Alfred's Drum Book, Level 1 and A Fresh Approach to Mallet Percussion. Percussion students do **not** need the Tradition of Excellence, Book 1.

We are looking forward to meeting with all of you at the Back-to-School event and during the first days of school! Students: We are expecting a great group of 6th graders and are anxious to help you begin your band instrument! Parents: If you have any questions before then, please email Mrs. Quist or Mr. Homuth. We will reply as soon as possible. You may also leave a message at 701-446-1781 (Mrs. Quist) or 701-446-1782 (Mr. Homuth). Thanks for your interest and support of the band at Carl Ben Eielson Middle School!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Nicole Quist
quistn@fargoschools.org
701-446-1781

Mr. Isaac Homuth
homuthi@fargoschools.org
701-446-1782

Mr. Tristan Byer
byert@fargoschools.org

(We will check periodically for messages during the summer).

The following list of instruments and recommended accessories was compiled to assist in your selection. These materials are available from our local music stores. The list contains the brands, models, and mouthpieces that we recommend for the beginning student. This list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but these are the instruments that have proven to be the most reliable in the directors' collective experience. If you have any questions or concerns about other brands, feel free to discuss them with the directors.

All students should have a nametag on their instrument, as well as a pencil that stays with their instrument. An at-home music stand is also highly recommended.

Flute: Yamaha or Jupiter brand instrument, a silk cleaning cloth, cleaning rod, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

Oboe: Yamaha or Selmer brand instrument, silk swab, 2 Leshner or Jones reeds of medium-soft strength, a reed guard, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

Clarinet: Yamaha, Selmer or Buffet brand instrument, a good mouthpiece (such as a Brilhart Ebolin, Vandoren 5 RV Lyre, or Vandoren 45) and a good inverted ligature (such as a Rovner brand), silk cleaning swab, Vito reedguard, thumb protector, 4 LaVoz reeds of medium strength, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

Alto Saxophone: Yamaha or Selmer brand instrument, a good mouthpiece (such as a Rousseau mouthpiece or Selmer C*) a good ligature (such as Bonade brand), silk cleaning swab, Vito reedguard, 4 LaVoz reeds of medium strength, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

Tenor Saxophone: Yamaha or Selmer brand instrument, a good mouthpiece (such as the Selmer C*), a good ligature (such as a Bonade brand), silk cleaning swab, Vito reedguard, 4 LaVoz reeds of medium strength, name tag on case, and books listed below.

Bassoon: Your child will receive a school-owned instrument in the fall. They will also receive a contract to be brought home, signed and returned with the \$120 rental fee for the school year. The contract will need to be signed before the instrument can be brought home. Students will need to come to class with 2 Emerald or Jones reeds of medium strength, a silk swab, a reed guard, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

Trumpet: Yamaha or Bach brand instrument, Yamaha or Bach mouthpiece, valve oil, slide grease, mouthpiece brush, cleaning snake, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

French Horn: Your child will receive a school-owned instrument in the fall. They will also receive a contract to be brought home, signed and returned with the \$120 rental fee for the school year. The contract will need to be signed before the instrument can be brought home. You will need to purchase an instrument snake, rotary valve oil, slide grease, mouthpiece brush, name tag for the case, and books listed below.

Trombone: Yamaha or Bach brand instrument, Yamaha or Bach mouthpiece, slide oil, tuning slide grease, mouthpiece brush, cleaning snake, name tag for case, and books listed below.

Euphonium/Baritone and Tuba: Your child will receive a school-owned instrument in the fall. They will also receive a contract to be brought home, signed and returned with the \$120 rental fee for the school year. The contract will need to be signed before the instrument can be brought home. You will need to purchase a cleaning snake, valve oil, slide grease, mouthpiece brush, name tag for case, and books listed below.

Percussion: Percussion Kit (drum pad and bell set), 1 pair Vic Firth SD 1 General snare drum sticks, 1 pair of Balter or Yamaha #4 (green rubber) mallets, name tag for their kit, and the percussion books listed below. They will also receive a contract to be brought home, signed and returned with the \$25 rental fee for the school year. This rental fee covers the use of larger school-owned percussion instruments.

Additionally, all 6th grade band students (except percussionists) will need this lesson book: Tradition of Excellence Book One (red) for their respective instruments.

Percussion students will need Alfred's Drum Book One and A Fresh Approach to Mallet Percussion.