

### Special Information for Percussionists:

In the best interest of the student, at least two years of formal piano lessons are required before starting percussion lessons. Piano lesson experience prepares a child to succeed as a percussionist. Learning percussion involves learning many different instruments, not just one as for woodwind or brass instruments. Playing percussion involves mallet percussion, snare drum, timpani, and accessories. Students playing percussion need to be able to read treble clef for mallet instruments, and bass clef for timpani. Prior instruction on piano enables the student to be successful in all of these skill areas. When students begin percussion in fifth grade, the first semester in band is spent working exclusively on mallet percussion. After that time, snare drum and other accessories are introduced. By the time students reach middle school, they begin work on timpani, and equal amounts of time are spent on mallets and snare through the rest of their school band experience.

If a student has not already taken two years of piano, but would like to play percussion, the student could start piano lessons now, and then play percussion after two years of piano lessons are successfully completed. The student could also learn another instrument in the meantime, then switch to percussion when ready.

Any student interested in percussion will also complete an audition/skill assessment with a member of the band staff. The student will play a prepared piano piece which will be graded on difficulty, accuracy and steady rhythm. There will be a sight reading exercise (one hand only). The student will also demonstrate rhythmic aptitude by echo clapping while keeping a steady tap. The ability to match pitch is also important.

Again, this policy requiring a minimum of two years of formal piano training is in place to give students the best chance to be successful.