

BROOKINGS BANDS

Percussion Requirements

The Brookings band program requires that students interested in starting percussion successfully complete 2 full years of piano experience or achieve level 2 competencies (see below #7) on the piano. The students will take a quiz at the start of their 5th grade year to determine that they can count basic rhythms, name notes and play a simple melody on a bell set. Each student's piano teacher will also be requested to fill out a questionnaire stating various facts and abilities about their student. The reasons and justifications behind acquiring necessary piano skills are as follows:

1. Piano skills have been needed in the past in the Brookings School District, as well as school districts that are comparable in size to the Brookings School District.
2. The same coordination skills are needed to play the piano with both hands as it is to play percussion with both hands.
3. The percussion books introduce new concepts at a faster rate than the other band instruments.
4. Unlike other instrument choices (clarinet, trumpet, etc.) where one specific instrument is concentrated on, the percussion family includes many different types of instruments (snare drum, bass drum, bells, timpani, triangle, claves etc.). The students without previous piano skills seem to become easily frustrated and quickly fall behind because of the lack of knowledge needed to adequately play the above-mentioned instruments.
5. Percussion parts are generally limited to the number of players that are needed on a given piece of music. Therefore, the level of participation could be greatly reduced depending on the number of students in the section and the level of their playing ability.
6. Basic skills must be mastered in order to move on to learning the full drum set. This is introduced in the 7th or 8th grade year. If the student wants to gain further knowledge on the set, lessons outside of the school day are encouraged.
7. Minimal level 2 piano competencies include---quarter note, eighth note, dotted quarter note, bass and treble clef note names, accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals), left hand accompaniment patterns using chords

We want all students that join band to excel on their chosen instrument and have a positive learning experience. Therefore, percussion students greatly enhance their learning experience as well as improve their rate of success by acquiring 2 years of piano or achieving a level 2 competency on piano prior to the 5th grade.

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