



MEIGS ACADEMIC MAGNET BANDS

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My name is Frank Norris, and on behalf of all of our Meigs Band teaching staff and students, I would like to personally welcome you and your family to Meigs Academic Magnet School, and extend an invitation for you to become part of our growing band program. At Meigs, **each student has two related arts classes every day.** This gives the students participating in Meigs Band the opportunity to learn a musical instrument while also taking the rotation of related arts class offerings.

We want you to be aware of a few of the benefits of participating in a quality music education program such as the Meigs Academic Magnet Band. These benefits will extend outside of the band classroom and into all aspects of your child's life! Students who participate in band programs from an early age develop:

- greater self-confidence
- a better sense of self-expression
- more rapid development of hand-eye coordination skills
- a heightened sense of responsibility, cooperation, and teamwork

Additionally, many studies conducted by the top research institutes in the United States have **PROVEN** that students who participate in instrumental music education programs throughout their middle and high school years:

- score higher on standardized tests in math and reading subjects
- have a higher attendance rates & fewer discipline concerns
- maintain a higher overall GPA
- **score an average of twenty percent higher on ACT & SAT tests**

The band program at Meigs Academic Magnet has grown to include over 200 students every year. The bands have sustained success in our performance level as proven through years of **ADVANCED** ratings in our State Concert Band Assessment performances. We have also developed a highly respected regional & national standing. In 2014 we represented the state of Tennessee at the Tennessee Music Educators Association Conference in Memphis, TN. In both 2016 and 2018, the Meigs Wind Ensemble was named **National Grand Champion Honor Band** in performance competition against bands from throughout the United States. Most recently, the Wind Ensemble was selected via competitive audition to perform at the Music for All Southeast Region Concert Festival in Atlanta, GA.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY INCOMING STUDENTS AND PARENTS

1. **I have never played a “band” instrument before and/or I have no music experience. Could I or should I enroll in the Meigs Band?** – ABSOLUTELY! In fact, it is rare that students new to Meigs Band have prior experience with their instrument. We gear our program to meet the experience level of all of our students, from the very beginning student to 4-year veterans and beyond.
2. **What instruments are offered in Beginning Band?** – Our first year students start out with the following instruments:

Woodwinds – Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Alto Saxophone*

*Students interested in Alto Saxophone will begin with Clarinet for the first semester (August-December). In January, our staff will test interested students and select those who are ready to begin alto saxophone. If students are not ready, we will also test again in May.

Brass – Trumpet, F Horn, Trombone, Euphonium, and Tuba

Percussion (Students will study ALL of the following) – Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Bells / Xylophone / Marimba (Mallet Percussion), Cymbals, Timpani

3. **Does the school provide instruments?** –Oboe, Bassoon, Horn, Euphonium, and Tuba are completely school-provided instruments. Traditionally, most students who start in any beginning band program on flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion will visit a local reputable music dealer in order to secure their instrument/percussion equipment needed for the class. However, *Meigs Band will do everything possible to provide students with access to an instrument if parents are unable to do so.* More information about this will be available at Incoming Student Registration Night on Thursday 3 May 2018.

4. **Are piano or guitar offered at Meigs?** – Yes! We encourage students who have previously studied piano/guitar/bass guitar to become part of the Meigs Band program! It is asked that (1) students have previous experience and (2) are willing to take lessons (if not already doing so). We have featured piano on a piece performed with our Wind Ensemble this semester, and will be doing so again next semester.
 - *Piano and bass guitar students with the Meigs Band will also study a concert band instrument.* Percussion is suggested for our pianists, due in large part to the similarity between piano and mallet percussion instruments. Trombone, euphonium, or tuba is suggested for bass guitar students, due to the similarity in music skills needed for those instruments. Our goal is to develop a talented core of piano/mallet percussionists who can be a part of our junior and senior high jazz program as well as perform with our concert bands. Small group and individual private lessons are offered at Meigs for bass guitar and piano based on demand.

5. **You mentioned private lessons? Are those available for every instrument?** – YES! We have a robust Small Group/Individual Private Lessons program where students have access to direct instruction on their chosen instrument! Lessons occur at school during band classes (or in some cases right after school), so there is no extra transportation necessary in order for your students to learn and grow alongside our dedicated professional instruction staff. *This program is highly encouraged. Over 85% of all students in the Band program take lessons with a professional every week!!* More information about our lessons staff can be found on the Meigs Band website.

6. **What is the time commitment outside of class?** – Beginning Band students have far fewer after-school commitments than you may imagine! Students can EASILY participate in Band throughout middle and high school *and* participate in school sports/clubs. **My father, brother, and I all played sports into our college years while maintaining our grades and fully participating in Band.** Aside from the normal practicing of their instrument, students will participate in the following activities outside of class during the 5TH Grade year:
 - **Fall “Jump Start” Camp** – One Saturday morning in mid-September to help students get a great start with their new instruments. Our teaching staff works with the students on basics specific to their instrument.
 - **Fall Semester Concert** – Late November/Early December
 - **“Spring Ahead” Camp** – Friday afternoon after school in March. Our teaching staff works with the students to prepare for Spring performances.
 - **Spring Semester Concert** - April
 - **Performances at Solo and Ensembles Assessment Festival** – late April/early May

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us as soon as possible via the contact information available with this document. We look forward to having your child begin their next music journey with us!