



Chaffey-Burke Elementary School

4404 Sardis Street, Burnaby, BC V5H 1K7

Tel. 604 296 9008

Principal: Mr. B. Cornell

Vice-Principal: Ms. K. Clark

Head Teacher: Ms. H. Skuse

September 10, 2022

Dear Band Families,

Welcome to the new school year – and to your “Band Parent / Guardian” role at Chaffey-Burke! I am so excited your child is joining Grade 7 Band – I look forward to our musical learning journey! 😊

On Thursday, I met with students to explain and demonstrate several of the instruments to give students a better idea of sound, size, and shapes of instruments. Over the next week, I will meet with each student individually to finalize instrument choices for the year.

I know that students (*and families*) are anxious to know what instrument they will play. **Thank you for your patience** as we figure out all Band details for the year ahead.

INSTRUMENT SELECTION

A balanced sound within the band ensemble is extremely important – meaning we won't have 15 saxophones, 30 flutes, and only 1-2 of the other instruments. If too many students are interested in one instrument type, I may ask them to switch to their second choice for the year. Larger instruments such as bass clarinet, baritone or French horn may be available from our district instrument pool.

Pre-pandemic, I would normally have given students an opportunity to try playing sounds on all the instruments to find their most natural fit. I am adjusting the plan again this year to match students and instruments as safely as possible, while continuing to navigate pandemic safety.

A few things I look for as instrument decisions are made:

- Saxophone and Bass Clarinet = hand-size must be large enough to reach keys properly
- Brass instruments = must be able to create a buzz sound with their lips and air. *
- Flute = must be able form the correct embouchure (mouth shape) to aim their air properly. *

*NOTE → for students interested in playing flute or brass instruments

- Proper embouchure is essential for creating proper sound. To ensure success, I will ask students to try buzzing the brass mouthpiece / blowing the flute head-joint (mouthpiece).
- Mouthpieces are cleaned with Sterisol, which is recommended by professional music organizations worldwide for cleaning of wind instrument mouthpieces.
- Burnaby School District's Health and Safety Officer has approved the use of Sterisol for cleaning mouthpieces / head joints, and proper cleaning protocols have been reviewed during District Band meetings.

I will finalize and publish the list of instrument choices as quickly as possible. To make the process of instrument choices fair and equitable for each student in the band, **please wait** until you have received instrument information from me before purchasing or renting an instrument for the year.

Thank you. 😊

GETTING YOUR INSTRUMENT

Once instruments are assigned, families will need rent or purchase a QUALITY instrument directly from a recognized music store. **Again, please wait until all of the Chaffey-Burke instrument selection is finalized.

INSTRUMENT RENTAL / PURCHASE

It is essential that students rent or purchase a **quality instrument** from a proper music store. A proper music store can complete maintenance and repairs on instruments as needed.

- In addition to supplying brand new inventory, music stores also offer 'used' instruments for sale or rent. All instruments are inspected, cleaned and sanitized and are completely safe to play.
 - If you are using a previously played instrument from friends or family, please have it checked by a music repair person to make sure it is in great shape for the year. It is extremely frustrating to learn on an instrument that doesn't function properly.
 - Please be aware that 'instrument-shaped-objects' are often available online or at big box, chain or warehouse stores. These instruments may seem less expensive, but are usually not durable or well-made, and usually cannot be repaired if damaged.
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MUSIC STORE INFORMATION

- Links to each company's rental / purchase information are listed on my school website blog [HERE](#).
 - Read through the School Rental Brochures and decide which company best suits your needs.
 - Families are welcome to attend our Rental Evening at Byrne Creek Secondary – which basically allows the stores to 'come to us.' Instrument selection is the same as if you went to the store location.
 - If you prefer to go to the physical store, you are welcome to do so. Many of the companies also have online rental / purchase and delivery of the instrument.
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DISTRICT INSTRUMENTS

- There may be a school district instrument available for the year if your child is choosing to play a larger instrument such as Bass Clarinet, Baritone or French Horn. (NOTE – Saxophones are not available).
 - User fees for district instruments are paid to the district.
 - All instruments were inspected and sanitized during summer repair – and are ready for another year of instruction.
- I will contact families directly with more details if your child will be playing a district instrument.
- The School District is aware there are students who wish to be in Band but worry that the cost of an instrument rental will be too high for their family. District instrument availability is prioritized for families needing support.
 - Please let me know if assistance is needed – all details will be kept confidential.

Reminder = ALL Grade 7 students wishing to join Band will be given the opportunity to participate.

So ... What do we do next?

Burnaby School District is hosting **Instrument Rental and First Lesson Night** for the first time since 2019!

This event will run between **4 – 7 pm** on **Tuesday, September 20** at **Byrne Creek Secondary School**.

- ★ Please make every effort to attend the First Lesson. Students will learn valuable information about their new instruments – allowing our Band to learn more efficiently in our beginning classes.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT BYRNE CREEK

Families needing to rent / purchase an instrument will go to the gym to meet with music companies.

- Please note: The rental process can take anywhere from a few minutes to an hour – it is helpful if you have pre-determined which company and rental plan you prefer.
- You are welcome to go directly to a music store to rent / purchase an instrument before September 20. Students are **STILL** expected to attend the First Lesson – and should have their new instrument with them.

After getting their instrument, students must attend a **30-minute First Lesson**. Please attend **1 class session** between **4:15 – 7:00 pm** for your instrument.

- Lesson attendance may be limited by the physical size of the classroom. If the lesson is full, you will be asked to wait until the next session.
- Students using district instruments can go directly to the First Lesson session.

AT THE LESSON

Each of our District's Band teachers will teach a First Lesson one type of instrument. The lesson helps students (and families) know how to assemble their new instruments correctly and start playing their first sounds properly.

- Please plan to have one family adult attend the **FIRST LESSON with** your child so that you both understand how to assemble and care for the instrument properly.

★ **PLEASE WAIT** until you are in the **First Lesson at Byrne Creek** before you assemble your instrument for the first time.

- ★ It is possible to damage the instrument if you put it together incorrectly!

MUSIC STANDS

- A proper music stand is an important piece of equipment for home practice to ensure students are playing with proper posture and instrument position.
 - Basic wire folding music stands cost approximately \$20 and can be purchased when renting or purchasing your child's band instrument for the year.
 - School music stands will be available during Band classes – and will be shared between classes and students. Students who prefer to bring their own music stand are welcome to do so.

CHAFFEY-BURKE BAND 'NOTES'

Class times = Tuesdays and Thursdays – times to be determined as we finalize school schedules

Our first Chaffey-Burke Band class with instruments = Thursday, September 22.

Band supplies = \$16.00 (includes method book / pencil / miscellaneous supplies)

→ Band books and supplies are already at the school and will be handed out to students once instrumentation is complete. **You do not need to purchase any other band book.**

→ The band supplies fee can be paid using SCHOOL CASH ONLINE.

- Online payment may not be set up immediately – please remain patient!
- School start-up is an incredibly busy time for our school office – and it will take time for the district, Mrs. Sanders and Mrs. DaPalma to set up school-cash online information.

Reminder - **Band assessment** occurs every class.

→ Students need to be prepared by completing regular home practice, bringing required materials to class (instruments, music stands, music books, folders, pencil / eraser), and completing and handing in all assignments (including practice records).

→ More information is included in the Chaffey-Burke Band Handbook (which will be sent home on Monday, September 12 – and is also available [HERE](#).)

You've made it to the end of this long letter ... {Thank you!} ... so ... one more time – Welcome to Band!

... and remember – although you may hear (a few? some? several?) very strange sounds in the beginning, please don't panic – those sounds will improve quickly. 😊

Email is the best way to contact me if you have questions or concerns.

→ Please remember to include your child's name in the subject line so I know who I am communicating with.

Thank you!

Ms. Lee, Band Teacher

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Please [click HERE to confirm](#) that your child is joining (or not joining) the
2022-2023 Chaffey-Burke Grade 7 Band.

