



FNSS / RLA Music Department

Mr. David Johnstone

PO Box 90

Fort Nelson, BC

V0C 1R0

Phone: (250) 774-6958

Fax: (250) 774-6960

Email: djohnstone@sd81.bc.ca

Band FAQs

A huge welcome to potential grade 5 band students and parents. I am very excited about the opportunity to help your child discover the joy of making music next year at RLA. I know there are always lots of questions so I have compiled a collection of the most common questions I am asked. If you have additional questions please do not hesitate to ask! - Mr. J

Q: What instruments are available to play in grade 5 band?

A: Flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, baritone, and trombone. I may have a few students switch to bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, and bari saxophone after Christmas to help fill out the lower section of the group.

Q: Can my son / daughter play drums, keyboard, or guitar?

A: These instruments are not offered at the grade 5 level. Guitar and piano is possible in the grade 6 jazz band, but it is expected that students will already know how to play.

Q: Do you need to have any musical training to be in band?

A: No, the class is taught assuming no forming musical training has taken place.

Q: Where do we get instruments?

A: There are three different ways to get an instrument:

1. **Sight and Sound**, a music company out of Terrace BC, offers a rent to own program. These instruments are excellent quality and end up being owned by the student after 2.5 years.
2. **School Rentals** are available for student use. These instruments are good quality. Students do not own these instruments as they remain property of the school district.
3. **Own / Purchase** an instrument from a friend or a store. If you choose to buy an instrument, only purchase it from a music store where there are knowledgeable people to guide you through the buying process. **DO NOT** purchase an instrument from a big-box store like Costco, London Drugs, or Walmart. Even though the price is attractive, these instruments are TERRIBLE in quality and will cause a lot of grief in the long term.

Q: How much does it cost to rent an instrument?

A: **Sight and sound** instruments that have never been played before cost more to rent than those that have been, and larger instruments will cost more than smaller instruments.

Instrument	New	Prev. Rented
Flute	\$25	\$18
Clarinet	\$25	\$18
Alto Sax	\$45	\$35
Trumpet	\$25	\$18
Trombone	\$25	\$18
Euphonium (baritone)	\$60	\$50

All **school instruments** – regardless of size, are \$12.50 a month to rent (or \$125 a year). It is important to note that I do have a limited supply of these instruments and they are available on a first come, first serve basis.

I NEVER want financial concerns to be the reason a student does not try out band! If your son / daughter would like to try band but you are worried about the costs please contact me to discuss our options! I will always find a way to make it work.

Q: What accessories do I need to purchase?

A: For brass, you need to make sure you have valve oil (trumpets) and slide cream (trombones). For clarinets and saxophones, you need to ensure they have a few boxes of reeds (2 – 2 ½ strength).

Q: Do I need to purchase a method book?

A: Yes. The school does own a few books, but the copies are not in great shape and have already been written in. The method books only cost \$15 and include DVDs for playing along at home.

Q: Is switching instruments possible halfway through the year?

A: This is strongly discouraged as it will be very difficult to learn a new instrument halfway through the year. However, if a student shows a positive and hardworking attitude it may be possible.

Q: Can my son / daughter switch to Fine Arts if Band isn't working for them?

A: All students are encouraged to make a full year commitment to band. It is very difficult to switch to Fine Arts mid-way through the year. If there are serious difficulties, we will have a meeting to discuss possible options.