

MCMS BAND NOTES

The Tradition Begins

Goal #1 - Stay Safe

We hope this finds you and your family safe and healthy. **That is our primary concern at this time.** While we miss each of our students tremendously, we know this current change to virtual learning is necessary to keep everyone safe. Please, continue to make that your top priority among all the other things you and your band student are being asked to do. Stay safe!!

What are we doing?

Through other communication from the school, you have been made aware that grades were frozen as of March 12. We will not be grading any student work from this point forward. Should your band student want to improve a grade, please contact Dr. Raiber (raiber@mustangps.org) to arrange a process for this. Our virtual learning process takes the form of projects. These can be completed at any time so students do not need to login to a meeting at a specific time. The goal of the first project is simply to help students learn how to use SmartMusic (See below for more information on SmartMusic.). Future projects are focused on ways students can use their music making as a means to affect change in their immediate worlds around them. We believe these can have considerable impact not only on each student's musical abilities, but help connect them to those around them in meaningful ways. **Students will learn more about why we make music.** We hope that all family members will benefit from these projects.

Google Classroom

Google classroom is where all class information will be posted. If your band student has not already joined, please use this link to learn how to do so: bit.ly/mustanggc . Once in the classroom, students should: 1) check the stream for announcements and comments 2) click on "classroom" to find the information about projects. Email Dr. Raiber (raiber@mustangps.org) with any issues or problems.

Projects in Google Classroom

We will post all the projects here so students can track what they have done to this point. Completion dates are recommended to help students stay on target as each project builds from previous work. There are no new concepts in the projects, but they will require students to apply their musical knowledge, understandings and abilities in new ways.

Project 1

Joining and using SmartMusic - April 6 - 10

Smart Music

We will use SmartMusic as a means to hear students play and provide feedback. The platform is great for this. Project 1 in Google Classroom is designed to help students create their SmartMusic account and learn how to use the platform. There are videos attached to help with this and there is special information for parents/guardians as well. SPECIAL NOTE: Because SmartMusic is normally used to do regular assignments it must be set up to assign a 'grade.' We are not taking grades. Students should use those only as an indication of their ability to play the correct pitches and rhythms. Dr. Raiber and Mrs. Tracy will add specific feedback to help students with other aspects of their playing. We also encourage students to explore other titles in SmartMusic. Students can look up other pieces they would like to play and find them in SmartMusic. There is an extensive library and it is all available for use at this time. So, once a project is complete and before the next one opens, students can find all kinds of things to play. Students can also earn 'badges' in SmartMusic (kind of like video games). There are three different ways to earn these badges. The Discipline badge can be earned by recording an assignment for 90 minutes or more each week. The Discovery badge can be earned by exploring non-assigned music and playing what you find 3 times each week. The Consistency badge can be earned by working on SmartMusic at least 20 minutes a day, 5 days per week. Have a great time with this awesome platform. It is really fun!!

Other Details to Follow

We know that you have many other questions about any number of issues like:

- How do I get the other things I have left at school?
- When and how will I return school-owned instruments?
- What about monies that we paid for the Six Flags trip?
- What about auditions for next year?

We are working on the answers to these and other questions. Obviously, the priority to this point has been making the transition to a virtual learning environment. As the learning curve on that process eases, we will have time to get answers to these questions. It may take some time to work these out, as everything needs to pass through many layers of approval before we can communicate those to you. Please know, we understand these are important questions and when answers are available, we will get them to you.