

Birmingham Covington School

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1525 Covington Road, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301

Dear Fourth Grade Parents,

Starting in 5th grade, BCS students have an option to take Band or Orchestra as an elective course. A few weeks ago, your children attended an instrumental music assembly. During the assembly, they were introduced to band and orchestra instruments. At that time, professionals from Marshall Music Company, with support from our music teachers, worked with each child to experiment with the various instruments. Instrument selections were finalized by determining which one of your child's choices were most compatible.

Eye-hand coordination, dental structure, and other physical characteristics were considered. These considerations play a key role in discovering a good fit for your child. In 5th grade the instruments that will be offered in orchestra are: violin, viola, cello and bass. In the band, flute, clarinet, trumpet and trombone will be offered in 5th grade to start. There will be an option, at a later time, to expand to other instruments for band students. The student's preference is always held in high consideration and the final decision is made by each family.

Instrumental music is offered as an elective to all fifth grade students. Classes meet twice each week during the school day and begin the first week of school. Choice hour classes designed specifically for beginning instrument instruction will be offered during the first quarter through the entire year, and are highly recommended. You will also receive an invitation from the music teacher for your child to participate in the August beginners BCS Band or String Camp. All incoming 5th graders are welcome. Children who do not choose to participate in Band or Orchestra have an opportunity to take "Thinkering Studio" as their elective choice.

Each year, approximately 70-80 of our fifth graders begin playing a musical instrument. A 5th grade student may only drop Band or Orchestra during the first four weeks of school or at the end of the first semester after communicating with the band or orchestra teacher and if there is room in the elective class. Playing an instrument takes hard work and patience. We ask that each child gives enough time to see if his/her skills can be developed over time and works closely with the band or orchestra teacher to smooth out any skill issues that a beginning player commonly may have. Practicing, as directed by the teacher, plays a huge part in the success of a beginning player as well.

After you have decided whether your child will take band or orchestra during their 5th grade school year, rental information will be sent to you from Marshall Music. There are other reputable rental music companies in the area that you may contact on your own. In either case, you will be responsible for securing an instrument and supplies for your child. No child will ever be excluded from playing a musical instrument because of financial reasons. If you need help providing an instrument for your child this fall, all you need to do is contact me. For students wanting to play the larger instruments, the district can provide one for use during the school day so that the family does not have to transport their larger rented instrument back and forth to school. The rented instrument would then be used for practice at home.

There will be a "district instrumental night" for the entire district on April 20th, 2017. BCS is in a unique situation in that we run our own instrumental day/fittings earlier, and your child will have already gone through the process of the "district instrumental night" meeting here at BCS. BCS families are welcome to attend, however, are not required to attend the April Instrumental night district meeting.

We look forward to working with you to ensure a successful school year.

Sincerely,
Mark Morawski
Principal

These classes meet twice a week for 45 minutes.

5th Grade Electives

Beginning Band

It is the intent of the 5th grade band class that students will enjoy the cognitive and artistic gifts that playing a musical instrument cultivate. This is a performance-based class. The skills developed in the beginning year are vital in providing a solid foundation for the progressive curriculum that can span through high school and hopefully a lifetime. For these reasons we ask that the average home practice routine consist of a minimum of 20 minutes at least five days per week. Students will receive a letter grade on their report card based upon the home practice routine and class testing. If choosing to participate in the instrumental music program, please give your child a boost by remembering to register for his/her instrument specific choice hour and register for August Band Camp.

If you have specific questions related to band, please contact: Jeff Krum at JKrum@birmingham.k12.mi.us

Beginning Orchestra

Students in the beginning orchestra class will be provided with an opportunity to learn how to play a pre-selected string instrument of their choice. The students will learn a progressive curriculum of string playing following national standards of music education. It is required that string players implement home practice for 20-30 minutes daily, five days per week, in order to support the success and development of each student. 5th grade orchestra will offer students an opportunity to perform in a concert setting and is a class that can be supplemented with choice hour open practice sessions, private lessons, and group sectionals, all of which involve building community and a great foundation for music. If choosing to participate in the instrumental music program, please give your child a boost by remembering to register for their instrument

specific choice hour and register for August Orchestra Camp. Please allow your child to experience life through the positive experience and teachings of music education here at BCS!

If you have specific questions related orchestra, please contact: Lynne Gillespie at LGillespie@birmingham.k12.mi.us

A 5th grade student may only drop Band or Orchestra during the first four weeks of school or at the end of the first semester (end of January), if there is room in the elective class.

Thinking Studio

Design, Make, Remix, Hack, Create, Build, Program, Craft, Etc.

Thinking Studio is a collaborative space/class/studio for students to:

- explore questions, challenges, topics or technologies of interest, at his/her own pace, and in directions of their choosing
- collaborate informally and formally, in person and electronically, synchronously and asynchronously
- plan and reflect on their creations, processes, successes, difficulties, and learning through a multimodal journal and portfolio
- create footsteps, examples, resources, or other artifacts for themselves and others who might follow
- integrate technology as appropriate

(think 3M, Bell Labs, Google's 20% time, Apple's Blue Sky Program, etc.)

Learn more here: <http://tinyurl.com/thinkingstudio>

2017-2018

5th Grade Co-curricular Selection

Please make your class selection at the following link:

<https://goo.gl/forms/il1FqCl9rGNQiKLs1>

You will receive one class for the entire year.

You will be asked to select one class and one instrument choice (if applicable):

Band-Clarinet, Flute, Trombone, or Trumpet

Orchestra – Bass, Cello, Viola, or Violin

Thinking Studio

Please complete the form by **March 31st, 2017** or an elective class will be chosen for you.

If you are unable to complete the Google form, a paper copy is available in the main office at BCS.