Things You Need to Know

1) Parent’s/Guardian’s Responsibilities
   - Renting and/or acquiring an instrument, lesson book, and music stand
   - Supervising daily practice
   - Obtaining supplies as needed
   - Arranging transportation for before-school rehearsals and concerts
   - Signing weekly practice sheet
   - Contacting instrumental teacher before withdrawing a student from the program

2) Student’s Responsibilities
   - Practicing at least 90 minutes per week (recommended breakdown = 15 minutes for six days; practicing every day is better)
   - Handling your instrument carefully
   - Bringing instrument, book, music, and practice chart to weekly lessons and rehearsals
   - Filling in daily practice chart
   - Coming to lessons on time and prepared
   - Making up classroom work missed during lesson time
   - Attending lessons, rehearsals, and performances

3) Lessons (during school)
   - Weekly 30-minute lesson. These are scheduled on a rotating basis so students do not miss the same subject week to week

4) Advanced Band Rehearsals (before school – 2nd and 3rd year members)
   - Weekly rehearsals will be held starting in October and continuing through May. These will be on Friday’s from 8:30-9:10 AM at Belmont Hills Elementary School in the music room. Students are expected to bring their instrument, pencil and music. Towards the day of a concert, rehearsals may be added; these are usually TBA depending on the group and their preparation needed.

5) Performances
   - Winter concert (December; October-December rehearsals)
   - Spring concert (May; January-May rehearsals)
Overview

1) Getting Your Student’s Instrument
   -Parents/Guardians are responsible for acquiring an instrument, lesson book, and music stand for their student. This is usually done through Coles Music Service (colesmusic.service.com). Other local music stores may be used, as well. However you chose to obtain an instrument, please make sure it is of high quality. For a list of acceptable brands, please contact Mr. Kaufman.

2) Commitment
   -We recommend that students commit to studying their instrument for the duration of the school year. However, if your child is having difficulties and truly feels that they cannot continue, please contact Mr. Kaufman prior to withdrawing them from the program.

3) Responsibility
   -Students are responsible for making up any classroom work missed during their in-school lesson.
   -Students are responsible for practicing the allotted amount of time weekly to make healthy progress on their instruments.

4) Private Lessons (outside of school):
   -Information about private lessons will be made available upon request.
   -Private lessons are highly encouraged and will provide students with more individualized attention, and will help them progress at a faster pace.

Music Resources

The following are local music businesses that carry supplies that you will need for your child’s instrument, such as reeds (clarinet/saxophone), oil (trumpet/French horn/baritone), slide grease (trombone), cork grease (clarinet/saxophone), music stands, method books, etc. Please consult with Mr. Kaufman for recommendations for making a purchase of any item your child needs. It is the parent or guardian’s responsibility to contact a company to arrange a purchase or lease of a musical instrument. Bensalem Township School District does not involve itself in any business transactions between an individual and any musical instrument dealer listed on this page.

Coles Music Service - (856) 848-2122 Colesmusic.service.com Music Retail/Instrument Repair
Music Forte - (215) 946-9295 musicforteonline.com Music Retail/Instrument Repair/Private Instruction
Settlement Music School - (215) 320-2600 smsmusic.org Private Instruction
Russo Music Center - (609) 888-0620 russomusic.com Music Retail/Instrument Repair
Music & Arts - (215) 443-7880 musicarts.com Music Retail/Instrument Repair/Private Instruction
Sam Ash - (215) 612-1339 samashmusic.com Music Retail/Instrument Repair
Lesson and Rehearsal Expectations

1) When it is time for your lesson, remember to bring your instrument, book, music, pencil and practice chart.

2) When you return to your homeroom/classroom, sit down quietly and resume your work.

3) Make sure that you keep your instrument in its case and in a safe place when you’re not practicing. Clarinetists and saxophonists should always have at least two extra reeds in their case. Trombonists and trumpeters need tuning slide grease and slide grease (trombones)/valve oil (trumpets)/rotor oil (French horn). Percussionists need their drum pads, drumsticks and mallets.

4) Please be courteous and respectful to everyone, whether in a lesson or outside of lessons. Remember that you are a musician now; everything you do reflects not only on you, but other members of the ensemble.

5) Don’t be afraid to ask questions if something is unclear to you. All questions that relate to music, your instrument, and your lesson are valid.

6) When possible, try to practice and perform every day. Even if you’re just playing a song for your family, it counts and will help you grow musically.

7) Encourage your friends to join you in making music. Practicing together is a lot of fun, and sometimes you or your friend will have a new idea that will help make something easier to play.

8) Rehearsals: It will be tempting to socialize during rehearsals, but it is important to understand that we don’t meet frequently and we need to make our rehearsals as productive as possible. Please save the socializing for before/after rehearsals.

9) No GUM, CANDY OR FOOD is allowed at lessons or rehearsals.

10) Students will respect the property of others. This means not touching instruments or equipment that does not belong to you.

11) Students will try to do their best at all times. This includes practicing at home.
Practicing

- Practicing a musical instrument is part of your homework for instrumental music and should be considered equally as important as classroom homework.
- What we learn in our lessons needs to be reviewed and reinforced at home, particularly the same day as your lesson or rehearsal. Break down any tricky sections in the music down to basics: clapping and counting rhythms; naming notes while doing the fingerings/slide positions; etc.
- Try to schedule your practice time for the same time slot every day. This will ensure that it becomes a priority and a part of your routine, even habit.
- It is MUCH better to practice 20 minutes EVERY day than to practice 2 hours for one day. This will help you retain concepts day to day, and will help the muscles you use to play become stronger.
- If on some days you can only practice for 10 minutes, that’s better than not practicing at all. You can do the other 5 or 10 minutes on a day when you have more time to make it up.
- The first month or so of reading music can sometimes be the hardest. Hang in there! Practice it every day and it will get easier.
- Students who miss lessons, attend lessons without the required items, attend lessons unprepared, or do not practice will be suspended from the program.

I.P.S. (Interactive Performance Studio) and SmartMusic

I.P.S. (included with the “Tradition of Excellence” lesson book) and SmartMusic are innovative, interactive music practice software that the Bensalem Instrumental Music Department has begun to integrate into its curriculum. Students may be given assignments via I.P.S. or SmartMusic; they complete those assignments and submit them to their teacher via Email or SmartMusic. The teacher is then able to listen to a recording of their performance and see an assessment of what they played. The teacher can also give every student individual feedback on their assignments. I.P.S. and SmartMusic promote a more efficient means of practicing and make it more fun, motivating students to practice.
Concert/Performance Dates

Winter Concert – Thursday, December 17, 2015   7:00 PM
Spring Concert – Thursday, May 26 2016   7:00 PM

Attendance and participation at all performances is mandatory. Any student who misses a performance will be suspended from the program.

Concert/Performance Dress

For all performances, including daytime performances, students are to wear the following:

Girls: white blouse and black or dark skirt or pants, black shoes. No jeans or sneakers, please.

Boys: white collared shirt and black or dark pants, black socks and black shoes. No jeans or sneakers, please.

If assistance is needed in this matter, please contact Mr. Kaufman at least two weeks prior to the performance.

Students who do not wear appropriate attire may not be permitted to perform.

Beyond the Elementary Instrumental Program

Instrumental music has long been considered a vital element to the educational mission of the Bensalem Township School District. This program, for many students, marks a turning point in their lives where they make a personal decision and put forth the effort to become a musical artist. Upon completion of the elementary band program, students who wish to continue may elect to participate in the middle school band program. Middle school band meets as a scheduled class and students earn a letter grade for their participation. Students also have the opportunity to participate in other ensembles (Jazz Band, etc…). When students reach Bensalem High School they may continue with the band program, earning credits for graduation. High school students begin the year in the BHS Marching Band, performing the pre-game or popular half-time show at the football games and featured in parades and festivals throughout the region. These students continue playing beyond marching season in the BHS Concert Band and may also be eligible to audition for the BHS Jazz Band. Our high school programs compete at music festivals throughout the year, often earning high honors and individual rewards. Students in the middle and high school who excel at their instruments may also compete individually in the Bucks County Music Educators Association (BCMEA) and Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District and Statewide auditions where the best musicians are selected for a district and statewide band and orchestra.
Parent and Teacher Communication

The preferred method of communication is email: pkaufman@bensalemsd.org
Voicemail is also available.
(215) 750-2800 X1566

Emails will be sent out frequently with updates and reminders. Please check your
ejunk/spam filters and please set your options to accept email from
pkaufman@bensalemsd.org
Check the Belmont Band website often for resources, information and updates:
www.bensalemsd.org ➔ Select School: Belmont Hills ➔ Faculty & Staff ➔ Kaufman

My goal is to give every child the very best band experience possible. It is only possible
to achieve this goal with your support.

This includes setting the expectation that your child practices at home on a regular basis.
You will need to encourage and support their efforts — even when what they are playing
doesn’t sound so good! Much like any other homework assignment, they might not want
to do it. However, it needs to be a priority in order for them to achieve success. Let them
know your expectations and hold them accountable. With regular practice and support,
your child will have success and enjoy playing their instrument.

If at any point you have questions about the band program, your child’s progress or just
need some tips for home practicing, please contact me.
Signature Page

(Please sign and return to Mr. Kaufman by Friday, September 25th)

I have read all of the attached information and agree to its terms.

__________________________  __________________
Student Name (please print clearly)

__________________________
Student Signature

Date

__________________________
Parent/Guardian Name (please print clearly)

__________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

__________________________
Parent email (please print clearly)

__________________________
Parent phone number

__________________________
Address

Please sign and return to Mr. Kaufman by Friday, September 25th.