



# Rockheights Middle School Music Program

1250 Highrock Ave. Esquimalt, BC V9A 4V7 Ph: (250) 384-7125

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN BEGINNING BAND!

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Dear Rockheights Music Family:

**I'm delighted that your child expressed interest in joining Beginning Band!** This will be a great opportunity to make meaningful memories and friendships. Here are some things that you need to know to help your child have a great experience in Beginning Band.

### **Is it safe to play music?**

We are lucky at Rockheights to have a relatively small student population and a large music room to rehearse in. [The Guidelines for Teaching Music in BC During The Covid-19 Pandemic](#) were developed by the BC Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in BC, and vetted by the BC Centre for Disease Control. These are the recommendations and guidelines we will be following at Rockheights.

### **When are the class times?**

**Mondays at 12:40 – 1:35pm (block after lunch)**

**Tuesdays at lunch (sectionals – only occasionally)**

**Wednesdays from 8:52 – 9:48am (block after morning advisory)**

Attendance at all classes is expected. Rockheights has a “pull out” model for its music program, which means that music classes happen during the normal school day, and students are responsible for any work that they miss when they're away from their usual class. Teachers are supportive and recognize that learning to play an instrument is an important opportunity for students. If anyone feels that they are falling behind, we can work together to find a solution.

### **How do I get an instrument?**

**You can rent, borrow or purchase an instrument.** Rockheights owns some wind and brass instruments, which can be loaned out for a small donation. \$20 for the year is suggested, but **no student will be denied an opportunity to participate in band because of costs.** Please read the brochure attached, which outlines your options for How To Get a Band Instrument

### **I'm concerned about costs, is there support if we can't afford to pay?**

**No student will be denied an opportunity to participate in the program because they can't afford an instrument (book, supplies or a uniform).** If your family is in need of assistance, **please speak with me** or send me an email.

### **“How do I work this thing?!”**

There is a lot to know about playing an instrument for the first time, and wind and brass instruments are all quite different from each other. Instruments are fragile, and if your child has not been taught how to assemble it correctly, damages can happen very quickly. To get everyone off to a great start, please do not try to assemble the instrument at home. I will go over how to do it correctly in class.



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## How much will I need to practice?

Consistent practice and commitment to your group are necessary for success. There will be assignments to help students set goals for practicing. Students should expect to practice for a minimum of one hour every week on their own time. The music rooms are available at nutrition break and lunch for practicing. It's a great way to spend the time.

## When are the concerts?

There are three major concert events this year. Your participation is expected at them:

- **7pm, Wednesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>**
- **1:00pm and 7:00pm Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**
- **1:00pm and 7:00pm Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>**
- **7:00pm Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> (choir only)**

If you can't attend a concert, please speak with Ms. McDonell as soon as possible.

## Is there a uniform?

Yes. Having a quality uniform contributes to our sense of pride and belonging. You are asked to please purchase a **Rockheights Music t-shirt for \$13**. If you are not able to pay, we can loan one to you. The full uniform for concerts, assemblies and festivals is: Rockheights Music t-shirt, black pants or skirt with tights, black socks and shoes.

## Do we go on trips and is there fundraising for them?

**Normally, yes**, beginners attend a tour of the elementary feeder schools. Overnight field trips are for students in grade 7 and 8. A retreat to Camp Pringle on Shawnigan Lake is planned for May.

## How will I receive information from the program?

From time to time, I will send information home via email or paper letters. Please make sure your email addresses are up-to-date with the school. The best way to reach me is through email at [rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca) or by calling the school at (250) 384-7125. [www.rockheightsmusic.com](http://www.rockheightsmusic.com) is the place to go to find all kinds of information about the music program at Rockheights.

## How can parents get involved?

Being involved in a music parents' group is a fantastic way to get involved in your child's schooling and to make friends! We hold meetings, which will be announced via email and on the website. Every student's "grown-ups" are welcome to attend. All "grown-ups" are warmly encouraged to come whenever they can!

## I still have more questions, how can I reach you?

Please get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns [rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:rmcdonell@sd61.bc.ca). I look forward to working with you!

Risa McDonell,  
Music Teacher, Rockheights Middle School