

Thought we would drop an e-mail regarding what your child should be practicing for the DMS Band program. We have heard quite a few students in the band hall practicing before or after school on materials that really are not helping your child progress.

First, practice sessions should really not sound “good”! If your child is working on music that they already know how to play, they are rehearsing, not practicing. Practice sessions should be about music, etudes, exercises that they are working out to perfect. Early in the week a practice session should be “rough”. Later in the week, the session should be improved.

Secondly, if you are hearing music from past concerts (i.e. Christmas music, spring concerts, etc) that is not what they should be practicing.

Thirdly, a successful student is going to practice daily. We really suggest that your child work everyday for about 20-30 minutes each day. This ensures that their muscles will continue to strengthen and develop the flexibility. This can be done in one setting or it could be done in two sessions (15-20 minutes in the morning , 15-20 minutes in the evening, for example)

Lastly, you can be involved in their practice routine by knowing what they should be working on. (see weekly practice record and daily routine listed below) If you do not hear the “correct” work, go and tell them that is not what they should be practicing. We are convinced that if you can help them “stay on track” with the development of a routine and the proper music, you will help make your child a much better instrumentalist.

Practice Routine:

1. Breathing Exercises (students know them)
2. Warm-ups (Preferably a combination of private lesson warm-ups and pages 4-8 in the Blue Book)
3. Scales (work on the ones that they can't play. If you hear a few scales played very well, they probably are only rehearsing the ones they can play) You should always hear the chromatic scale (all the notes on their instrument) Scales should be worked on slowly, many times with a development of memorization.
4. Technique exercises (private lesson material and Blue Book pages 10-30)
5. Band Music (see practice record for weekly information on what band music should be worked on)
6. Solos/Ensembles (from your private teacher or band director)
7. Something FUN!!! (We always recommend to end your practice session with something fun. Many students have purchased book(s) that have familiar pop tunes, movie music, etc. These are great ways to help your child stay motivated. It is also a great way to finish on a positive note!! Check out www.jwpepper.com or www.penders.com to purchase those “fun” books.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above info, please do not hesitate to e-mail or call us at 817-949-5563/4

Thanks
The Band Guys