

# Important Information for Students Entering 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Who Are Interested in Enrolling in Band or Orchestra

Middle School is an exciting time for students who elect to participate in a music performance ensemble including band, chorus, and string orchestra. Here is some important information you need to consider when selecting your child's elective schedule.

- CHORUS: All students, regardless of their experience or training, may enroll in 6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus. Chorus is a wonderful community experience and students who attended a Newton elementary school have had chorus in 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- BAND & STRING ORCHESTRA: Only students with a basic level of proficiency on a concert band or string orchestra instrument should be enrolling in 6<sup>th</sup> grade band or orchestra.

Students that HAVE NOT elected to participate in Newton's 4<sup>th</sup> grade musical instrument classes and have no other experience learning to play an instrument will find it very difficult to be successful in 6<sup>th</sup> grade band or orchestra. The only grade that Newton Public Schools offers introductory instrument classes is the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Any student who missed the introductory lesson program offered in Newton (or other school district) but would like to participate in band or orchestra starting in 6<sup>th</sup> grade will need to be supported with a private lesson experience. Many students who take private instrument lessons while simultaneously participating in their school's band or orchestra, often develop their skills quickly and do find success.

There are numerous outlets in the greater Newton area where parents can arrange private lessons and acquire an instrument, including Newton Public School's after school *Music Lesson Extension Program (MLEP)*. Though Newton does not provide financial assistance for private music lessons, families that demonstrate need may be provided a loaner instrument from their school's instrumental music teachers.

More information about the MLEP can be found online at:

<http://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/782>