



MCS

<http://www.archomaha.org/education/music-catholic-schools/about/>

Music in Catholic Schools, Catholic Schools Office, Mercy Hall, 3300 N 60 ST, Omaha, NE 68104-3402
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1. **COMMITMENT:** Joining band requires dedication and commitment. All students need to give a musical instrument a fair chance—at least one school semester, but a full school year is a fairer try. Band is rewarding, but takes effort from the player to make it fun.
2. **PRACTICE:** Individual practice at home on a regular, daily basis is **essential** for progress. Twenty minutes of focused practice a day is sufficient for most beginners. Students who are more advanced should practice thirty minutes each day. Parental guidance and encouragement are needed to commit to a practice routine. Students often become frustrated and surprised that learning to play an instrument requires so much work. Adequate practice enables students to do their best and develops self-discipline. Students should record the time practiced on the lesson assignment sheet or in the book (depending on teacher's preference) and also have this signed by a parent.
3. **BAND SCHEDULE:** Music in Catholic Schools provides elective band classes during the school day. Most students miss some class time each week to attend band classes. Normally, band classes are held at two different times each week so that students do not miss the same class. Often, band class times are rotated within a block of time at the school. It is the band student's responsibility to get missed assignments and get any make-up work done for other classes. Band classes are missed occasionally for holidays or special events and are not usually made up. Records are kept so that the total number of band classes at each school is equal to that of other participating schools, which normally averages to 62 classes per school year (for twice a week schools.)
4. **COMMUNICATION:** Assignment sheets or charts in the lesson materials should be filled out by students and signed by their parents. Teachers may add comments regarding the student's progress. Communications regarding progress and concerns take place regularly, mostly via email. Newsletters and flyers are posted on the MCS website, and some hard copies are handed out. Please check students' band folders and backpacks for band flyers; and read info posted on "Upcoming Events" of MCS website. Each teacher has two joint-schools concerts – one in December and one in May. There are special rehearsals prior to these performances. Teachers may be reached via e-mail or call the MCS office and request a return call. The MCS administrator is in the office Mondays through Thursdays from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm. (N.B. When events need to be canceled or postponed due to weather, announcements are made on KFAB Radio; and a voicemail will include needed information. Please listen to the radio when weather is a concern.)
5. **BAND MATERIALS:** Parents need to supply the instrument, stand, and supplies (reeds, oil, cork grease, etc.) Some MCS instruments are available to loan to students, and those with financial need receive priority. Lesson books and sheet music are provided. The student may keep lesson books, but sheet music needs to be returned each year.
6. **INSTRUMENT CARE:** Students are taught proper care of their instruments during the first few band classes. Instrument care sheets are distributed to beginning students. Accessories, including **music stands**, are needed to play instruments, as well as to keep them in proper playing condition. Reed instrumentalists should have no fewer than two good reeds at all times. Brass players need valve or slide oil or slide cream and a water bottle. A small, lint-free cloth can be kept in most cases to use for wiping off the instrument when putting it away. Parents should remind students to use their care supplies and to obtain any when necessary.
7. **REGISTRATION/PAYMENT:** Parents who cannot attend a band meeting to register may download a registration form from the MCS web site, or have the student get one from the band teacher. It should be filled out completely and sent to the MCS office **with a payment** to the MCS office. Students need to have the forms and payments turned in **no later than September 25**. For those wishing to make monthly payments, automatic electronic payments (not credit cards) take place around the **15th of each month starting in mid-October and going through mid-May**. Those wishing to drop their child from the program must notify the band teacher and the MCS office in writing, but the commitment is for a minimum of one semester.
8. **TUITION ASSISTANCE:** Assistance will be given to those who qualify for free or reduced lunch. Additional assistance may be available for students who cannot pay the entire tuition cost. Contact the MCS office for applications. **Instruments are also available to loan to those with financial need**. Completed applications need to be returned to MCS no later than September 15. Contact the MCS administrator at 402-557-5600.
9. **FUND-RAISING:** Students will be asked to participate in fund-raising activities, as needed.