

8th Grade Muirlands Parents,

I just wanted to take some time to get you acquainted with the opportunities your student has next year to participate in instrumental music at LJHS. Depending on the class, our courses can satisfy either Physical Education (Marching Band PE) or Fine Arts - "F" requirements for UC admissions (Intermediate Band, Jazz Band, String Orchestra) graduation requirements.

ALL students (from absolute beginners to advanced) are welcome and encouraged to take any and all classes (even if they did not play in the band or orchestra at Muirlands). The often IMMEDIATE benefits that taking music courses has on all other disciplines (from math and science to language and expression) has been well documented, and I am proud to say this has not gone unnoticed here in La Jolla.

Our classes are: -

PE Marching Band: A physical education class designed to promote lifetime wellness and physical fitness through the rigorous training of a marching band. Students choose an instrument to play (or choose to be a part of the color guard - which combines dance and gymnastics to become the visual aspect of the band) and perform at several school (home Friday varsity football and basketball games) and civic (parades here in La Jolla, in downtown and uptown San Diego, and in other areas of the county) events. Class time is spent connecting exercise and physical conditioning with the various body systems needed to control optimum performance in order to march and play. The FITNESSGRAM is taken in the spring. This class REPLACES standard PE in the student's schedule (note: ALL INCOMING FRESHMEN must take a PE course as a district requirement. This course satisfies that requirement). This class takes place during the school day, so it does not conflict with sports or extra curriculars (about half of the current marchers in the band are student athletes, playing everything from football to soccer to water polo).

Intermediate Band: Considered the "core" of the instrumental music program, this is the concert band class at LJHS. Students select a wind instrument or percussion instrument to play - and perform in concerts throughout the course of the school year. Beginners and advanced students are both welcome to join. The focus of the class is working together as a group to create music as an ensemble. This class takes place during the school day, so it does not conflict with sports or extra curriculars. Students in marching band and jazz band are encouraged (though not required) to join this class in order to get extra time perfecting their musical skills (since PE Marching Band has a physical education focus and Jazz Band and String Orchestra meet only 3 days a week, this is the ONLY instrumental music class at LJHS where students get to play every day).

Jazz Band: This class performs modern (20th and 21st century) music - but NOT just jazz -- pop, rock, reggae, swing, and folk music are some other styles we've performed. This class meets as a 7th period three days a week so that students with full schedules can still take a music class. Although it is an added 7th period, students still receive a grade and graduation/UC college admissions credit. For this class, students select an instrument appropriate for jazz music and perform at various concerts throughout the school year. On Wednesdays, the Jazz Band combines with the string orchestra to rehearse "full sized big band" music.

String Orchestra: This class caters to classical string players (violin, viola, cello, bass, and classical guitar) and is the only LJHS class offered to students who play those instruments. This class meets as a 7th period three days a week so that students with full schedules can still take a music class. Although it is

an added 7th period, students still receive a grade and graduation/UC college admissions credit. For this class, students select a string instrument and perform at various concerts throughout the school year. On Wednesdays, the Jazz Band combines with the string orchestra to rehearse "full sized big band" music.

Outside of class, there are several activities/social events planned specifically for music students to do (all optional of course! Kids can participate in as much or as little as they want). There's an active Music Parent Booster Association that runs most fundraisers and has officer positions open every year (although ALL music parents are invited to the meetings and ALL music parents have a vote on any issues) and meets every month, and a big awards ceremony/awards banquet at the end of the school year to celebrate what has been accomplished. Students are free to take as many or as few music classes as their schedule can fit. Many students take more than one class - and some even take all four!

I would love nothing more than to teach ALL of your students in one of my classes at some point. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to send me an email at <mailto:mfiedler@sandi.net> - I will get back to you right away!

Thanks for your time,
Michael Fiedler
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