



# Sunset Ridge School

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## **OCTOBER LETTER:**

### **MID-TERM REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC**

Can you believe it is already October and the beginning of the holiday season? Our band program continues to move forward at a fast pace. We are enjoying the unlimited possibilities of music learning and music making, otherwise known as - ART. Fifth grade beginning band students have been working diligently on making good sounds on their instruments. We have been reinforcing how to create our basic tones with consistency. Sixth grade advanced band students have been focusing on how to practice efficiently. We warm-up together in class, play a scale, and dive into an exercise in our books. We dissect each exercise, looking for patterns, identifying pitches, counting/clapping, playing on our mouthpieces alone, breaking into smaller chunks, and so much more! Seventh and Eighth Grade Hawk Band students have been working on reinforcing their musical basics: scales! They have been meticulously working through different scales, arpeggios, and chromatics weekly; they are tested on each scale pattern weekly as well. I am beyond impressed with the willingness to learn and effort that I have seen from the students.

During this time of year, students can begin to feel that school is a bit "routine." The realization of mid-term tests, lengthy assignments and crucial deadlines becomes apparent. Many students find themselves in a bind and begin to seek ways to shed the burden of "over-commitment." Unfortunately, band is often the target of this quick-fix solution. It is my hope that together, we can encourage these talented students to continue studying an activity that reinforces the highest level of intellect, memory and sensory awareness.

Over the years, music educators have carefully tracked the SAT test scores of students involved in music classes compared to those who were not. The statistics highlight a dramatic variance that cannot be ignored:

"Students with coursework/experience in music performance scored 52 points higher on the verbal portion of the SAT and 37 points higher on the math portion than students with no coursework or experience in the arts. And a difference in scores increased with the number of years involved. Those who studied music four or more years scored a combined 101 points higher on the SAT than students with no coursework or experience in the arts." Profiles of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, The College Board (1997)

The benefits of music study extend far beyond the performance. Please join with me to guarantee a promising future for (name of student) and all the young musicians in our program by encouraging them to continue their study of music.

Sincerely,

Dr. Caryn Kunz  
Director of Bands  
Sunset Ridge School