

Western Wayne High School

Instrumental Music Program

Mr. Raymond Stedenfeld, Director of Bands

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am pleased to inform you that we are very fortunate to have 7 computers in the band room with some fantastic software on them. One of the new programs that your child will be using for practice and assignments is **SmartMusic**. SmartMusic is the most fun way to practice that I have seen since I was in 3rd grade 22 years ago.

Band members will be required to use **SmartMusic** to submit many of their tests and assignments. They will be assigned time to complete these tasks in school during their lessons. While in the past it has taken me one full period to hear no more than 5 scale tests, I can now send 7 students to the computers and have done in 10 minutes for me to grade and review at a later time. This will increase the time I am actually able to spend with the student teaching new material and helping them to improve their skills and musicianship. This is perhaps one of the most important and useful aspects of **SmartMusic**.

There is an exciting option for home practice, and to also allow the students to take some tests at home. While **SmartMusic** will not work with “*virtually connected*”, you can purchase a subscription for home use for only \$36 a year. This subscription makes literally thousands of dollars of music available for practice at home. And, the students can actually take their tests in the comfort of home. Simply visit <http://www.smartmusic.com> to access the program. There are videos there that explain the many uses.

While **SmartMusic** is very useful for testing, it is even more useful as a practice tool. It makes practice fun! There are solos, exercises with really cool accompaniments like *ISLAND GROVE* and *DANCE ENCOUNTERS*. Also, virtually all solos that PMEA District 9 uses for tryout pieces are in **SmartMusic**. And even more, several of the band pieces that we will be performing in the spring concert are there too. This means that your child can practice at home with the sound of the whole band playing while they practice their part. And, when I assign music tests, they will be able to drill as much as they want at home before submitting their performance for a grade.

If you are able to do so and you have the technology at home I suggest you purchase a subscription for your family musicians. You can get more information online at www.smartmusic.com There is a brief video that you can watch which shows how the program works and you can purchase it right online and download it to your computer.

If I can be of further assistance, please contact me.

Musically yours,

Raymond Stedenfeld, Director

