**Scientist’s and studies have proven again and again that being in band class makes student’s scores higher! The discipline and mental training involved in learning an instrument if uninterrupted will create higher GPA scores and more scholarship opportunities and the drive in student’s to get into and COMPLETE higher education with success. Here is a small list of how:**

**Students learn to read a new language – Music.** Whether it is following music notations, chords, hearing chord changes, harmonies, melodies, rhythm, tempo etc. they develop the skill to communicate and “speak” a whole new language.

**Students learn teamwork.** They get very good at working together. Team skills are a very important aspect of being successful in life. Playing an instrument requires you to work with others to make music. You must learn how to cooperate with the people around you.

**Students learn to memorize.** Once they have followed their charts and know the music fairly well, they memorize it for performances, so they are constantly in the mode of retaining large “chunks” of data, downloaded and stored in their memory bank for later use. Research has shown that both listening to music and playing a musical instrument stimulate your brain and can increase your memory. A study was done in which 22 children from age 3 to 4 and a half years old were given either singing lessons or keyboard lessons. Another group of 15 children received no music lessons at all. Both groups participated in the same preschool activities. The results showed that preschoolers who had weekly keyboard lessons improved their spatial- temporal skills 34 percent more than the other children. Not only that, but researchers said that the effect lasted long-term.

**It refines listening skills.** Being in a band requires students to use their best listening skills. They listen for rhythm, pitch, blend, dynamics. Playing an instrument requires you to listen very carefully to things. You learn to hear when you or someone else is playing a wrong note or chord. Tuning your instrument means hearing if the pitch you’re playing is high (sharp) or low (flat). By playing in a band you are guaranteed to improve your listening skills.

**It helps develop better eye and hand coordination.** Students learn to use their eyes differently. They must follow their music charts and translate what the chart says through coordinating their fingers via their instruments. So, by reading musical notes on a page, your brain subconsciously must convert that note into specific motor patterns while also adding breathing (if you’re a singer) and rhythm to the mix.

**It teaches you to multi-task, manage time and have better organizational skills.** Being in a band requires you to really learn how to be organized and to manage your time wisely, since there is more than just you to worry about. A good musician knows that the quality of practice time is more valuable than the quantity. In order for a musicians to progress quicker, they will learn how to organize their practice time and pick out the challenging parts to work on, making efficient use of time. And then there’s the printing out of charts, having a pencil ready to take notes, putting the charts in a binder if necessary and remembering to bring all those things along with their instrument, cables etc. to band rehearsal. Not to mention rehearsal times, organizing gigs and all the rest of the stuff that goes with being in a band.

**It teaches you discipline.** Playing an instrument can be very challenging. One of the qualities that musicians learn is discipline. Practicing often and working on the hard parts of music and not just the easy and fun stuff requires discipline. When you’re in a band sometimes you are required to play the “boring” parts that require little skill. Yet if it’s not there, it makes the song you’re planning to perform only “half baked”. Every musical part is important. The best musicians in the world are masters of discipline which is why they are so successful on their instrument. They see the simple and the complex through one lens.

**It boosts self-esteem.** Being in a band gives students a sense of pride and accomplishment and is good for their self-esteem. It raises their confidence level and eases their mind that they will not let their band mates down or disappoint them. They learn to bring their part to contribute to the overall success of the band, and in doing so they feel validated.

**It teaches you perseverance.** Learning to play an instrument takes time and effort, which really teaches you patience and perseverance. Most people can’t play every piece of music perfectly the first time. In fact, the majority of musicians have to work difficult sections of music multiple times in a row before they can play it correctly. If you hang in there the hard work will pay off, even if you feel like giving up.

**It provides opportunities to be stretched.** There have been many times where I would put another instrument in someone’s hand, one they don’t play or feel comfortable with, and said to them, “you’re playing bass for this song”, or “you’re singing back-up” or “grab that tambourine and play along” (yes, I draw the line at the cowbell!) They learn to be stretched beyond their comfort zone, and in the process they put themselves out there and expand their knowledge of other instruments and learn what it’s like to be under pressure.

**It improves your comprehension skills.** According to a study published in the journal Psychology of Music, “Children exposed to a multi-year program of music tuition involving training in increasingly complex rhythmic, tonal, and practical skills display superior cognitive performance in reading skills compared with their non-musically trained peers.” It’s not surprising to hear results like that because music involves constant reading and comprehension. When you see black and white notes on a page, you have to recognize what the note name is and translate it to a finger position on your instrument. At the same time, you also have to read what rhythms the notes are arranged, or if playing by ear, retain the rhythm you hear from a recording, in your memory bank.

**It expands your knowledge of musical styles, genres and music history.** Regardless of the primary style of music your band plays, a good band will inevitably venture out of their boundary lines and play other styles of music, whether it be for a specific gig or just as an experiment. Often times you are forced to research certain genres and styles, artist profiles, specific chord charts etc. and listen to music you ordinarily wouldn’t listen to. All of this leads to an often unintentional “crossing over” or meshing of styles.

**It develops your social skills.** Playing an instrument can be a great way to enhance your social skills. I have seen many kids come out of their shell through playing in a band. Weekly band rehearsals become an oasis in an often stressful and complex world and many times the friends you make in the band become like family. It’s very common for people to gain lifelong friendships through musical activities like these.

**It teaches you to be a performer.** One of the goals of practicing so much on your instrument is so that you can perform for others. The more you get up in  front of people and perform, the easier it becomes and the more you will enjoy showing off your skills that you worked so hard to develop. Playing on stage in a band helps build confidence in yourself, and being prepared and really knowing how to play your part makes it much easier to get up and play for a crowd.