

WGSD Elementary Strings Program Student Information Packet 2023-2024

GENERAL PROGRAM INFO.

- The string orchestra program in Webster Groves was established to provide string instruction to young students in order to prepare them for a lifetime of enjoying music. The program is aligned with the district mission statement of academic and personal success for all students.
- The elementary program serves the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade levels. All classes meet after school, twice a week (Monday/Wednesday, or Tuesday/Thursday), for 45 minutes. Only students who successfully complete the 3rd grade program may play in the 4th grade program; the same is true from 4th to 5th grades.
- There are no classes on half days, and no classes during conference weeks.
- In case of emergency cancellations, instructors will notify the secretary at your child's school as quickly as possible.

TEACHER CONTACT INFORMATION

3rd Grade M/W				<u>Room</u>
<u>Ann Hirschl</u>	<u>Edgar Rd.</u>	<u>M&W</u>	2:55-3:40 p.m.	Health Room
<u>Cynthia Brown</u>	<u>Edgar Rd.</u>	<u>M&W</u>	2:55-3:40 p.m.	Modular
<u>Manuela Kaymakanova</u>	<u>Bristol</u>	<u>M&W</u>	2:55-3:40 p.m.	Music Room
3rd Grade T/TH				
<u>Manuela Kaymakanova</u>	<u>Avery</u>	<u>T&TH</u>	2:55-3:40 p.m.	Music Room
<u>Cynthia Brown</u>	<u>Avery</u>	<u>T&TH</u>	2:55-3:40 p.m.	Modular
<u>Ann Hirschl</u>	<u>Givens w/Hudson @GIVENS</u>	<u>T&TH</u>	2:55-3:40 p.m.	Music Room
3rd Grade Friday				
<u>Manuela Kaymakanova</u>	<u>Clark</u>	<u>FRI</u>	2:50-4:15 p.m.	Music Room

4th Grade				<u>Room</u>
<u>Friederike Wykes</u>	<u>Avery</u>	M&W	2:55-3:40 p.m.	<u>Modular</u>
<u>Friederike Wykes</u>	<u>Edgar Rd.</u>	T&TH	2:55-3:40 p.m.	<u>Health Room</u>
<u>Alex Mosier</u>	<u>Avery</u>	M&W	2:55-3:40 p.m.	201
<u>Nora Navid</u>	<u>@Bristol w/Clark, Givens</u>	T&TH	2:55-3:40 p.m.	212
5th Grade				<u>Room</u>
<u>Luke Sivertson</u>	<u>@Bristol</u>	FRI	2:50-4:15 p.m.	110
<u>Sarah Heuermann</u>	<u>Avery</u>	T&TH	2:55-3:40 p.m.	<u>208</u>
<u>Sarah Heuermann</u>	<u>Edgar Rd</u>	M&W	2:55-3:40 p.m.	<u>Music Room</u>
<u>Evan Ghislin</u>	<u>@Givens and Hudson</u>	TH	2:50-4:15 p.m.	<u>Music Room</u>

IMPORTANT DATES

- Meetings
- Registration
- 1st Day of Classes
- Conferences / Progress Reports - no classes during conference weeks
- Rehearsals
- Concerts - Dec. (Grades 3,4,5), Feb.-Pops (Grade 5), May (Grades 3,4,5)

PRACTICE AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

- Students are expected to practice as much time as needed to keep up with the pace of the class. On average, this will take between 10-20 minutes a day, 5-7 days a week. Some students may need additional time.
- Most young students need assistance from parents and teachers to help set up a successful practice routine. An effective routine takes place in a quiet area away from distractions and requires effort from the student *and* parent. Simple rewards are highly effective in encouraging young string players; kind words, stickers, and high fives can go a long way. Parents are urged to keep in contact with the strings teacher to see if their child's practice time is adequate.

- Students are expected to be productive and cooperative in every class. Any student with consistent behavior issues will be dismissed from the program.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Class attendance is required. A student who misses class frequently, and therefore slows down the progress of the group, will be dismissed from the program. The student's calendar must be clear for both class times every week. Please avoid scheduling any doctor, dentist, or other appointments during class times. Attendance is required even if a student forgets an instrument at home. Any student with a cast, splint, or doctor's note which prevents playing is expected to attend class and participate as much as possible in modified ways. Students benefit from attending class even if they cannot physically play. They can still learn concepts and attain knowledge from the lessons.
- Due to the fast paced learning in our classes, students are not excused to miss strings class to attend any afterschool enrichment programs.
- Any student who misses the first day of class without advance notice to the teacher will be dismissed from the program, and a student on the waiting list will be enrolled in the class in their place.

CLASS DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- Our teachers have daily commitments beyond this program which is why we appreciate you being on time to pick up your child after our class. If you cannot pick up your child at the dismissal time, please enroll them in the school's Adventure Club or find a reliable carpool.
- Any family that is more than 5 minutes late for pickup, more than 3 times, will be asked to find a new solution (Adventure Club) or be dismissed from the program.
- Please make sure teachers know what your dismissal option is in advance so they can make sure your child is safe getting to where they need to be.

INSTRUMENT CHOICES

- **3rd grade:**
 - All students learn the violin together.
- **4th grade:**
 - Individual students may elect to stay with violin, or switch to viola, cello, or bass. Any change must happen within the first week of classes.
 - If a student and their family decide to make this change to viola, cello or bass, they should rent the new instrument and bring it to the first class. Students should know that bass is a large, expensive, and fragile instrument.
 - Students and their parents are responsible for transporting ANY instrument to and from class, and should keep this in mind especially if choosing the bass.

- Students are encouraged to find the instrument that truly matches their personality, however changing instruments will require extra practice time and should be done with careful consideration.
- **5th grade**: students keep and continue their 4th grade instrument

INSTRUMENT RENTALS

- All students need their own instrument for class and daily practice. Students must bring their instrument to school on class days and then bring them home to practice after class.
- Please rent an instrument from a **reputable string shop**. Buying an instrument from the internet or a pawn shop is not recommended.
 - “Top Notch Violins” is an excellent string shop for all of your instrument needs. It is owned by a former WGHS graduate who has invested in our current orchestra program. They are located at 3109 Sutton Blvd., Maplewood MO, 63143. Their phone number is 314-696-2172.

CONCERTS

- The hard work of practice and rehearsals pays off in concerts.
- Each year there are 2 required performances.
 - In December, individual 3rd and 4th grade classes do a small informal concert/presentation for parents during the regular class time. The 5th grade classes participate in the February Pops Concert at WGHS with Hixson and WGHS Orchestras.
 - In May, all of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade string students perform together for the elementary spring concert. This concert is the final event for our strings program this year.

SUPPLY CHECKLIST

- **3rd Grade:**
 - Proper size violin with bow and rosin
 - Name tag on instrument case (included with rental)
 - Sponge shoulder rest (included in rental), or purchase sturdy shoulder bar separately
 - Cleaning cloth (included in rental)
 - Folding music stand (purchase separately) - needed for each class and concert
- **4th and 5th grades:**
 - Essential Elements: Book 1 for the correct instrument (available at Top Notch Violins, or other music shops, and on Amazon.com)
 - Proper size instrument with bow and rosin
 - Name tag on instrument case (included with rental)
 - Sponge shoulder rest (included in rental), or purchase sturdy shoulder bar separately - for violin and viola players
 - Rock Stop - for cello and bass players
 - Cleaning cloth (included in rental)
 - Folding music stand (purchase separately) - needed for each class and concert
 - Music folder
 - Pencil

GRADE LEVEL LEARNING GOALS

3rd Grade (learning by rote)

- **By the end of 3rd grade, students should be able to:**
 - Properly hold the violin in playing and rest positions
 - Identify parts and functions of the violin and bow
 - Demonstrate proper pizzicato and bowing techniques
 - Name and play all open strings; and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd finger pitches on all strings
 - Be able to demonstrate basic beginner rhythms by rote
 - Perform songs by rote and with note name "cheat sheets" in unison with others

4th Grade (start Essential Elements Book 1)

- **By the end of 4th grade, students should be able to:**
 - All 3rd grade expectations
 - Name and play all 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th finger pitches on all strings
 - Read, identify, count (using number counting system), and demonstrate whole, half, quarter, and eighth note rhythms and rests
 - Perform music in 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 time signatures
 - Read and identify 1st endings, 2nd endings, and repeat signs
 - Name all lines and spaces on the staff
 - Perform music in 2-part canon

5th Grade (continue and complete Essential Elements Book 1)

- **By the end of 5th grade, students should be able to:**
 - All 3rd and 4th grade expectations
 - Demonstrate slurs and ties
 - Define Da Capo, Fine, and upbeats
 - Read and identify dotted half notes
 - Demonstrate swinging 8th notes
 - Define and demonstrate staccato bowing technique
 - Demonstrate forte and piano dynamic levels
 - Perform orchestrated music in several parts
 - In 5th grade, students will continue in Essential Elements Book 1 where they left off from 4th grade, and complete the book by the end of the year. This way, when they continue orchestra at the intermediate level in 6th grade at Hixson, they will be ready to start Essential Elements Book 2.
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Hixson Middle School Orchestra Information

In case parents and students are wondering about what orchestra is like in 6th grade as they end their 5th grade strings experience, here is some general information.

- There are 3 levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Student grade level does not matter.
- **Beginner** - for students with no experience at all on their instrument, or students with little experience that did not complete the majority of Essential Elements Book 1. Also, for students who want to try a brand new instrument (for example, if your student participated in the elementary strings program on violin, but wants to try cello in 6th grade, they would need to be in the Beginner level).
- **Intermediate** - for students who completed the elementary strings program and completed Essential Elements Book 1. This class will start students at the beginning of Essential Elements Book 2. Students will need to send Mrs. Grubb an audition video in the spring, but she will send out an email with instructions, and then will decide if students are ready for this level.
- **Advanced** - for students who have completed Essential Elements Book 1 and at least some of Book 2. This class will start students at the beginning of Essential Techniques Book 3. Students might be ready for the advanced level if they have taken private lessons outside of class and have learned advanced concepts from Book 2 or upper level Suzuki books. Students will need to send Mrs. Grubb an audition video in the spring, but she will send out an email with instructions, and then will decide if students are ready for this level.

Hixson Middle School Orchestra Director
Mrs. Stephanie Grubb
Contact at grubb.stephanie@wgmail.org