

Elementary Band and Orchestra Program Update: December 2024

We wanted to give an update to our current 4th and 5th grade families on the staffing issues in the Elementary Band and Orchestra Program. We have been doing significant outreach to fully staff the program, but finding quality instructors has been a challenge and so several sites have limited instructors. We were able to make adjustments to the model in several sites and keep the program going but have not been able to start at the Redmond Middle School site at this point. We are working with the elementary schools that feed into that program to find a creative solution to give students access to elementary band this year.

We also want to thank everyone who responded to the recent survey about our elementary music program. Similarly to the [survey we sent in Spring 2023](#), we had a high response rate, with over 1300 responses and we appreciate the thoughtful and creative input. The commitment our community has to high-quality learning in elementary music came through clearly. We are [continuing the process of planning for changes](#) that will ensure all students have consistent access to high-quality and diverse learning in elementary music and we will use your insights to inform our work.

Here are the key themes that emerged from your responses:

- **Instrumental Learning:** Many parents expressed a strong interest in having more opportunities for students to learn and play various musical instruments within the school day to help foster a lifelong appreciation for music. Access to the before school instrumental program was identified as a major challenge. Transportation, scheduling, consistency of program, and affordability of instruments were particular issues.
- **High Priorities in Music Education:** Singing and performance were highlighted as essential components of music education, with benefits for social skills, confidence, and overall enjoyment of music. The importance of social connections was a recurring theme. A significant number of responses highlighted the importance of incorporating music theory into the curriculum. This includes learning to read music notes, understanding beats, and gaining a deeper knowledge of music fundamentals. There was an interest in having students learn about diverse music styles and experience live music as well, potentially through field trips or guest performers.
- **Instruction and Resources:** Many responses highlighted the terrific teachers we have here in LWSD and providing professional learning for them was highly valued. A theme of students enjoying greatly enjoying music already, because of engaging

activities including learning new songs from diverse genres, singing and playing games together, and learning to play a wide variety of instruments, came through. A need for additional resources was identified, including high-quality curriculum and consistent access to instruments, to improve the quality of music education.

- **Community and Parental Involvement:** The importance of community and parental support in enhancing music education and ensuring its success was emphasized. There was a strong interest in having more communication about music activities and more opportunities to be involved in supporting music education.

We are committed to addressing these challenges and enhancing our music education program based on your feedback. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in making our music programs successful.

Dr. Jen Rose (she, her)

Associate Superintendent of Instructional Services

Lake Washington School District

jerose@lwsd.org

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