

KJHS ORCHESTRA BACK-TO-SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Ms. Daria Van De Loo

- vandeld@unit5.org
- KJHS office: [\(309\) 557-4407](tel:(309)557-4407)



Upcoming Dates

August 28: 5th grade intro night @KJHS, 6pm

October 1: Deadline for online ILMEA audition submissions (select 7th and 8th graders)

October 2: Portillo's Fundraiser (20% of sales go to KJHS Music Program!)

October 22: 5th Grade "Informance" and 8th Grade Concert @KJHS, 6pm

November 3: Music Parents Music Extravaganza (6th and 7th grade) @Normal WEST High School, time TBD



IMPORTANT LINKS

- [KJHS Orchestra Handbook](#)
(includes calendar for the year)
- [Past Newsletters](#)
- [Music Shoppe Preference Page](#)
- [Recommended Private Teachers](#)
- [Unit5 Music Parents Website](#)
(website is new and still a work in progress)

PARENT/GUARDIAN "TO DO"

- [Sign off that you've read the 25-26 Orchestra Handbook](#)
- Mark your calendars for upcoming concerts and events!
- Sign and return school instrument use form (cello/bass only)

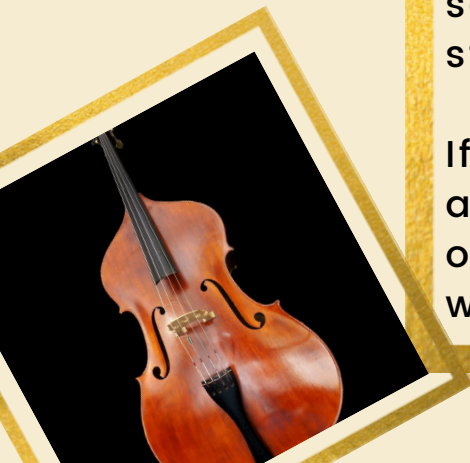
MY CHILD IS INTERESTED IN SWITCHING TO BASS



In 6th grade, students have the option to switch to bass. Usually cellos switch to bass because they read the same clef, but I've also had violins and violas switch successfully.

I like to have students start the year on their instrument from 5th grade so they get a review with note reading and ease them back into school/orchestra routines without the added stress of a new instrument.

If your child is interested in switching to bass, or at least trying it out, please sign up for a lesson or two [HERE](#). After the lessons we will determine whether or not bass will be a good fit!





CONCERT EXPECTATIONS

As we start the school year, please review the handbook policy on concert attendance.

Attendance:

Students are required to attend concerts -- it is part of their grade! If a student cannot make a concert date, I need to know as soon as possible. Here is the missed concert grading policy per the handbook for the 24-25 school year:

All students, no matter the reason for their absence from the concert, will be required to complete a makeup assignment if they wish to receive credit for the concert. Because a concert cannot truly be recreated in its entirety, they are only able to earn up to the following grades for their concert makeup assignment (using SBG grading scale of 1-4pts):

- An excused absence called into the attendance line, such as illness or family emergency, **in addition to contacting Ms. Van De Loo: 3**
- Absence from a performance that has been communicated to Ms. Van De Loo within 6 weeks of the concert: **3**
- Absence from a performance that is NOT communicated to Ms. Van De Loo within 6 weeks of the concert (excludes illness and family emergencies, see above): **1**
- Absence from a performance with NO COMMUNICATION to Ms. Van De Loo OR the student chooses not to complete the makeup assignment: **0**

**** Please understand that sports conflicts or other non-emergency situations will not count as a full credit make up.*

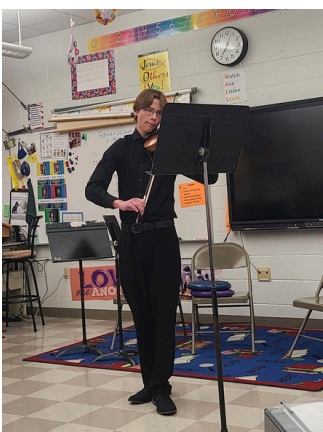
Dress Code:

Students in grades 6-8 should wear all black dress clothes. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you are struggling to afford concert clothes! I have extras that have been donated and the school can also help out if needed.

Students in 5th grade should wear something nice. This could include but is not limited to khakis, polos, dresses, skirts, button downs, skirts, etc.

All students should avoid jeans, leggings, tennis shoes, and clothes with holes if possible.

I would always rather students show up to the concert no matter what, even if they're not in concert clothes. Students being there is the most important part!



WHAT GRADED WORK LOOKS LIKE IN ORCHESTRA

Grading System:

4: The work demonstrated is above and beyond what is expected. Students are not only able to complete the work without assistance but they are able to help and teach peers about the content.

3: The work is exactly where students should be and is of high quality. Students are able to complete the work without assistance.

2: The work is still progressing. Students are able to complete the work with the help of the teacher or peers.

1: The quality of work is not where students are expected to perform.

0: Work was not completed or turned in.

Please note: I give out very few 4s for playing related grades. I reserve 4s for truly exceptional work that demonstrates playing levels beyond what we are doing in class. I do give out 4s for perfect scores on written tests.

6th–8th Grade:

Students receive a grade for orchestra just like they do all their other classes.

Assignments will usually include:

- **A playing test every 2–3 weeks**
 - I am doing playing tests differently this year. Like last year, we will be doing in class partner assessments.
 - Students will not need to complete these playing tests at home unless they miss class and wish to record their test via video/email rather than complete in class at a later date.
 - However, students should be practicing at home during the weekends.
- **Rhythm sheets**
 - These are completed in class. We do one example at the beginning of each class and then turn it in when completed
 - Summative rhythms are given after the completion of these sheets. These are always completed in class.
- **Other in-class activities**
 - Often I will give worksheets or other practicing tools as part of an in-class activity. Students are expected to complete these during class and show they were participating

If students are using their class time wisely, the only at-home work students should be having to complete is their own individual practice or work they missed while absent.

GRADED WORK, CONTINUED



5th Grade:

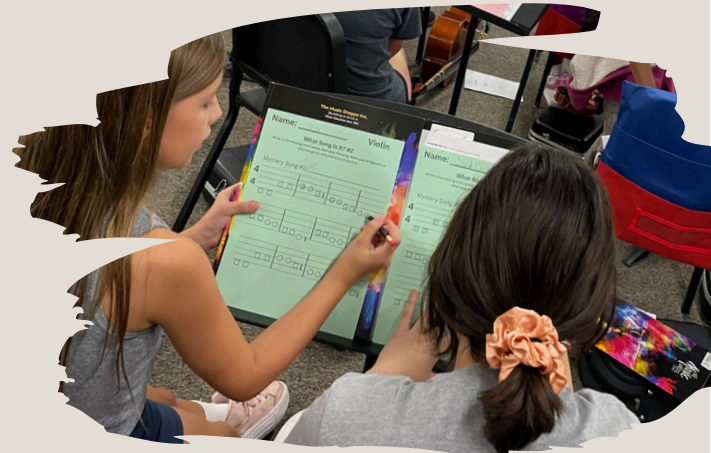
5th grade students also receive a grade for being in orchestra. As with the middle school students, all assignments are completed in class. The only work that needs to be completed at home is practicing over the weekend.

Assignments during class will include:

- **Partner assessments**
- **Small group playing tests** (they will get to earn different color tags for their instrument cases as they pass their tests)
- **Note name written tests and activities**



If you would like to check the progress of your 5th grader's grades, please see the directions for doing so in Infinite Campus [HERE](#).



You're invited to a
Portillo's®
FUNDRAISER



Join us at Portillo's for a fundraiser to support:

Kingsley Junior High Music

When:

October 2, 2025

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

at the Portillo's located at:

202 Landmark Drive

Normal, IL

20% of sales will benefit your organization. Order online or in app for pickup using code **PORTILLOS51** before checkout in the "Coupon Code" field, or show this flyer or a digital version to cashier when ordering at the restaurant. Valid on drive thru, pickup, kiosk, and in restaurant orders.

Portillo's®
FOR GOOD

portillos.com/community

For online/app orders to qualify for the fundraiser, orders must be placed for pickup only, from the participating restaurant, on the fundraiser date and during the listed fundraiser hours. Gift card purchases, delivery orders, and orders placed on the third party websites are excluded from the fundraiser. Online ordering subject to availability. \$200 minimum fundraising sales required for the organization to receive donation. Cannot be combined with other offer codes.

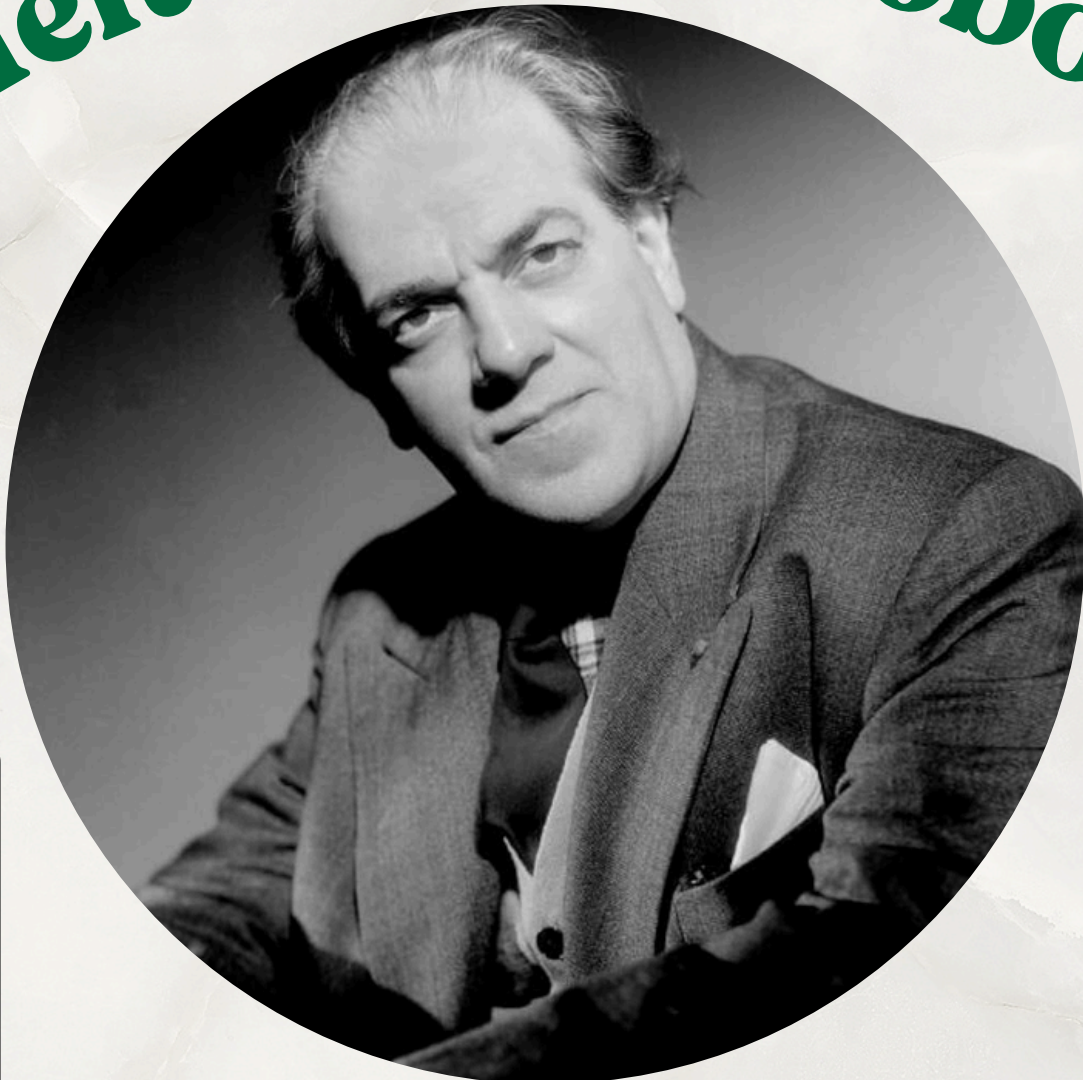
WE'RE HIRING! APPLY AT PORTILLOS.COM/CAREERS

Musician of the Month

Like last year, we will highlight a different musician/composer every month. We will learn about their lives, listen to their music, and explore the different ways orchestra instruments can be played! I invite you to learn along with us and discover new artists of all backgrounds, music genres, and playing styles. Check out the playlist below that will include some of each musician's most prominent works and performances (all school appropriate).

The playlist will be updated monthly.

Heitor Villa-Lobos



[Listen
Here!](#)

1:57 -0:34

