



Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) music community. The elementary music staff will be offering an online “Music Back to School Night” on **Tuesday, September 9, 2025 (6-8 pm) via [Zoom](#)**. The event is intended for all 4th-grade families and any new 5th-grade students in SMMUSD. Our elementary music faculty will provide information about the music program and answer any questions families may have. Our district vendor information will be included for parents who may be interested in either renting or purchasing high-quality instruments at a reduced price. Additionally, SMMUSD maintains an inventory of used, cleaned, quality instruments available for students to use, eliminating the need to rent or purchase them. Vendor information and SMMUSD instrument request form will be presented at the event.

[Join via Zoom](#)



RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES FOR ALL INSTRUMENTS:

Soft cleaning cloth, name tag or luggage tag on the outside of the case, and a folding music stand for home use.

String students: Music Teachers will determine the appropriate size string instrument during music class prior to Music Back to School Night.

Violin	Shoulder rest, rosin, cleaning cloth	Flute	Cleaning rod and cloth
Viola	Shoulder rest, rosin, cleaning cloth	Clarinet	Cork grease, 6 reeds (size 2), reed case, and cleaning swab
Cello	Endpin strap, rosin, cleaning cloth	Trumpet	Valve oil, slide grease, mouthpiece brush, trumpet snake brush
		Trombone	Yamaha slide lubricant, small water spray bottle, mouthpiece brush, trombone snake brush

Students enrolled in the Santa Monica-Malibu USD are not required to pay any fee, deposit, or other charge for participation in an educational activity offered by the school or the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, except as authorized by law. Donations are sought and accepted for various activities and supplies, and are at times critical to the continued success of classes and activities, but donations are voluntary. State law requires us to provide a public education free of charge. Subject to certain exceptions, the right to a free public education means we cannot require students or their families to purchase supplies. The elementary music program will provide all necessary supplies for your child to have a quality educational experience. However, many parents/guardians choose the option of purchasing their own supplies, not only for use at home, but for their child to use in the classroom.

The following is a list of expectations that, with your help, will contribute to a successful year for your musician. **Please see the attached music report card with rubric for grading/assessment criteria.**

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Come to class sessions on time and be prepared.
2. Practice **five days a week, 15-20 minutes a day.**
3. Be sure to have your instrument, music, folder, and pencils (no pens) for every class.
4. Have a **name tag** on your instrument case.
5. Participate in Winter and Spring presentations.
6. Realize that you will be required to replace/fix any lost or damaged folders/books/instruments beyond normal wear and tear.

FAMILY SUPPORT TO ENSURE STUDENT SUCCESS

1. Select a suitable and accessible location for practice.
2. Ensure that your child practices regularly.
3. Sit with your child at least once a week during practice time.
4. Continue to be involved in your child's music education.

Please note that you are responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen instruments/books.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES IN MUSIC CLASS

Taught by district-funded, certificated teachers, music is considered an academic class in the SMMUSD. Students will receive standards-based music grades for each grading period. The music staff will expect and uphold the same high standards as those required in other classes.

Thank you for taking the time to carefully read and discuss this letter with your musician. We look forward to making music with all of the students! If you have questions regarding the information above or would like to contact a member of the music faculty, please visit <http://www.smmusd.org/vapa/faculty.html>. You may also leave a written message with contact information at your school site. (Please identify school, grade level, and specific music class in all communication.) Thank you for allowing us to provide your musician with an outstanding music education. We look forward to meeting you both virtually and, hopefully, in person at the school!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jim Wang,
Coordinator, Visual & Performing Arts

SMMUSD Elementary Music Staff

Kirsten Bersch- Lead teacher at SMASH Elementary, kbersch@smmusd.org
Jar-el Garcia- Lead teacher at Edison Elementary, jgarcia@smmusd.org
Jessi Spike Gravelle- Lead teacher at SMASH Middle School, jgravelle@smmusd.org
Heather Klenk- Lead teacher at McKinley Elementary, hklenk@smmusd.org
Lindsay Okumura- Lead teacher at Roosevelt Elementary, lokumura@smmusd.org
Sean Pawling- Lead teacher at Grant Elementary, spawling@smmusd.org
Stephen Raman- Lead teacher at Webster Elementary, sraman@smmusd.org
Ryan Rowles- Lead teacher at Franklin Elementary, rrowles@smmusd.org
Dr. Sean Sonderegger- Lead teacher at Malibu Elementary, ssonderegger@smmusd.org
Erin Tomita- Lead teacher at Will Rogers Elementary, etomita@smmusd.org

**Music Standards Achievement
Classroom Effort / Citizenship
Practice Habits / Responsibility**

Music standards include: Demonstrating proper performance techniques, reading and writing music notation, composing and improvising music, analyzing and making judgments about music, and knowledge of the history and styles of the music students perform.

MUSIC ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Progress Indicators	Music Standards Achievement Indicators	Classroom Effort/ Citizenship	Practice Habits / Responsibility
4 Masters Standards	Performance errors are minor. Excellent tone. High level of musicianship.	Consistently cooperative. Excellent team player. Consistently gives best effort. Excellent posture and position. Consistently on time to class.	Consistently practices at home. Completes all assignments. Always brings required materials to class.
3 Approaching Standards	Few performance errors. Good tone and musicianship.	Usually cooperative. Good team player. Usually gives best effort. Good posture and position. Usually on time to class.	Usually practices at home. Completes most assignments. Usually brings required materials to class.
2 Making Some Progress Toward Standards	Making some progress toward satisfactory performance achievement, tone, and musicianship.	Sometimes cooperative. Occasionally a team player. Effort inconsistent. Inconsistent posture and position. Sometimes tardy.	Inconsistently practices at home. Completes some assignments. Usually brings required materials to class.
1 Making Little Progress Toward Standards	Needs more development to meet grade level standards.	Rarely cooperative. Rarely a team player. Little effort. Posture and position need significant improvement. Often tardy.	Rarely practices at home. Rarely completes assignments. Rarely brings required materials to class.