OCTOBER 2025 VOLUME NO. 1

ENCORE!

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON MUSIC DEPARMENT

PREMIER EDITION OF ENCORE!

madison music dept.

The Music Department at Madison Middle School Proudly Presents ENCORE!

With over 10 music groups and numerous performances throughtout the year, this is your one stop location for all information about everything happening in the Madison Music Program!



Right - Our amazing guest pianist Mr. Cruciani and Mr. Elkins our orchestra teacher on cello, accompany the 7th & 8th Grade Chorus at a winter concert perfomance.

MUSIC AT MADISON

The 7th and 8th Grade Band
The 6th Grade Band
The Jazz Band
The 6th Grade Chorus
The 7th & 8th Grade Chorus
The Madison Singers
The Madison Orchestra
The String Ensemble
Broadway Babies Drama

IMPORTANT DATES

Here are some performances to mark in your family calendar!

The Fall Classic -9/27
Madison's Got Talent - 10/9
The String Fling - 11/25
Broadway Babies Info Meeting and show announcement - TBA
Western Regionals Auditions - 12/13
Trumbull Tree Lighting -12/5
7th & 8th Grade Chorus & Madison Singers Winter Concert -12/9 @7pm
7th & 8th Grade Band and Jazz Band - 12/11 @7pm
Grade 6 Band and Orchestra - 12/16 @7pm
Broadway Babies Show - 3/11 & 3/12
Western Regional Music Festival - TBA
6th Grade Chorus -5/5 @ 6pm
Orchestra - 5/5 @ 7:30pm
7th & 8th Grade Band and Jazz Band - 5/7 @7pm
Grade 6 Band and Jazz Band - 5/12 @7pm
7th & 8th Grade Chorus & Madison Singers Spring Concert -5/14 @7pm
Memorial Day Parade - 5/25
Music Festival Band and Orchestra Trip - 5/29
Stepping Forth -TBA

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Harmony HIGHLIGHTS

CHORUS AT MADISON

There are over 300 students participating in chorus at Madison! This includes the 6th Grade Chorus and the 7th & 8th Grade Combined Chorus. Madison Singers is our after school 7th & 8th grade honor choir. The 7th and 8th graders are currently preparing for the winter concert on December 9th.



Mr. Sullivan and Miss Linda pose in their concert shirts.



Stars on the ceiling in the chorus room! One for every chorus student!

Madison Singers 2025-2026



The Madison Singers performing at a winter concert







Above - The 7th and 8th Grade Combined Chorus
Left - The Madison Singers at a Spring Concert.

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Deana Saunders,
Chorus and Musical Director

Education
BS in Classical Voice and Music Education
MS in Music Education and Conducting
Years at Madison - 28
Favorite thing about teaching - Kids! They are capable of amazing things! Their capacity for kindness is endless! And they are so funny!
Hobbies - Photography, reading, watercolor painting, baking and hiking.
Favortie song - Oooh that's a tough one! Rainbow Connection by Kermit the Frog is a great one!



Best trip ever! Banff, Canada

"THE ONLY THING BETTER THAN SINGING IS MORE SINGING." — ELLA FITZGERALD

CHORUS Students of the Month

6



DAVIS BURKE

7



EVELYN BUTURLA

8



XAVIER KANE

BROADWAY BABIES

MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA

DO YOU SING?

DO YOU ACT?

INFORMATIONAL MEETING FOR STUDENTS

THURS. NOV. 6TH

2:30-3:20

IN ROOM 125

LISTEN TO ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR CHANGES!

DO YOU DANCE?



ARE YOU CREATIVE?

SHOW DATES
MARCH 11 & 12
2026



This meeting is for any student interested in becoming part of our cast or crew this year. At the meeting, you will learn about the show, audition process, potential crew jobs and commitment.



THE STRINGS BEAT

ORCHESTRA AT MADISON



The year is off to a musical start in room 123! - a note from Mr. Elkins

I'm excited to be able to write to you all in our first monthly newsletter. Each month I'll highlight what our students are working on, share important reminders and tips, and recognize some outstanding achievements.
Starting this year, I'll be selecting a "String Student of the Month" from each grade—6th, 7th, and 8th. These students will be chosen for their positive attitude, strong work ethic (both in and out of school), and noticeable improvement. Each winner will receive a certificate and be featured on our classroom "Wall of Fame."

All of our string groups are off to a fantastic start!

- Beginning Strings have already made it to page 17 in their book and been practicing plucking and more recently using their bows. They have learned the D Major scale, ask them how many ways there are to play it! We have also started Dreidel which will be a song they will be featured on at the Winter Concert.
- 6th graders have been reviewing key techniques like posture and bow hold from elementary school and are now practicing Clog Dance and Olaf and the Elf Maiden. The last song is quite a fun, but challenging one, that includes stomping, plucking, and playing!
- 7th and 8th graders are diving into their concert pieces, including Pirates of the Caribbean, Espresso (yes—like the Sabrina Carpenter song!), and our newest addition, Falling Snow. It was a little funny to start that one while it still felt like summer—but with cooler weather on the way, it's starting to feel just right!

EVENTS

STRING FLING 2025

The
Trumbull
String Fling

Featuring District-Wide String Programs

Madison Middle School 6th, 7th & 8th String Orchestra
Hillcrest Middle School 6th, 7th & 8th String Orchestra
Trumbull High School String Orchestra

Trumbull High School
Tuesday, November 25, 2025
6:30 PM







THE STRINGS BEAT

ORCHESTRA AT MADISON

I've been reminding students (and could use your help too!) about the importance of regular home practice—which, of course, means they need to bring their instruments home. As stated in the contract, instruments should be taken home regularly, especially on weekends and holidays. I like to tell them the instrument cubbies at school are for short-term parking only! While I understand that sometimes instruments need to stay during the week, they really shouldn't be left at school for long periods. Students have been told that leaving instruments behind may affect their grade, so your help reinforcing this at home is greatly appreciated. - Mr Elkins



pratice TIP

The key is to start small and stay consistent. Rather than aiming for a big goal right away, it's better to begin with 2–3 short sessions a week, about 10–15 minutes each. Consistency is much more effective than long, occasional sessions—just like brushing your teeth, doing a little each day makes the biggest difference! Over time, they can then increase their number and length of sessions.
Help your student find times in their week that work best—before dinner, after sports practice, a weekend morning, etc. Small steps add up quickly when they become part of a routine!

STRINGS Students of the Month

6



Catalina A.
Catalina is always engaged and ready to answer questions, something that can be difficult in 1st period when even my brain is still waking up! She also took on the extra challenge of joining the String Ensemble and is doing a great job.

"I ENJOY THE CHALLENGE OF PLAYING A DIFFICULT INSTRUMENT LIKE THE VIOLA."

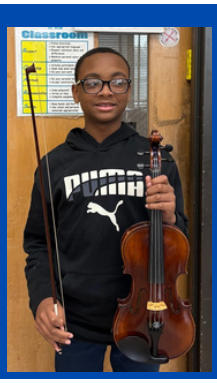
7



Jayden L.
Jayden is always prepared, never needs to be reminded to use correct posture, and is a great role model in class. He took on the extra challenge of performing in the "Madison's Got Talent" show and showed excellent composure on stage as well as showing off his ability in Vivaldi's "Winter", a piece he learned with his private teacher.

"WITH THE VIOLIN, THERE ARE NO BOUNDARIES!"

8



Austin G.
Austin has always been one of the most motivated string students at Madison since 6th grade, and has carried that motivation throughout being a member of the String Ensemble last year and this year as well as playing in the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestra outside of school..

"WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT THE VIOLIN IS MAKING MUSIC WITH FRIENDS."

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BAND TOGETHER

BAND AT MADISON

What's Happening in BAND...

7th And 8th Grade Band

Madison's 8th Grade Band recently performed the National Anthem from memory to kick off the Trumbull Classic marching band competition, in collaboration with the 8th grade students from Hillcrest. The percussion students practiced as a drum line with field equipment and played a cadence as they marched to the field. Recently, students have been preparing to play a variety of test examples from the beginning of their "green book", with more advanced rhythms in 6/8 and dotted eighth/sixteenth note rhythms. Wind students also worked on playing a variety of minor scales (natural minor, harmonic minor, and melodic minor) and a few folk songs from various cultures, while percussionists worked on music with rudiments such as 7-stroke rolls, and also more advanced mallet examples.

7th Grade Band students have been working on improving their ability to play a number of scales, and also have been preparing a variety of folk songs from the beginning of their "blue book". They are also working on playing music with new key signatures, recognizing intervals by ear, and learning new rhythm patterns which involve syncopation. Test examples include a wide variety of pieces including multicultural folk songs, American Spirituals, and Mozart's Turkish Rondo. Some are also working on small group ensemble pieces, and amusing pop "play-alongs" from fun sites like Flutorials (flute), Clarified (clarinet), Brassified (trumpet), and Saxplained (saxes).

6th Grade Band

Experienced players from 6th Grade Band have been reviewing concepts at the beginning of their "red book" and preparing to play test examples recently. Some of the experienced players have been working on learning a new instrument. Students have also been working on passing their first scale (Concert B-flat) with many of them very successful. Test examples they've been working on include a variety of music such as Frere Jacques, Mexican Hat Dance, Eerie Canal, and Bingo. Students are working on including more flats and sharps, higher and lower notes, basic rhythm counting skills, and improving their ability to play together as a group. They also discussed a variety of time periods in music, also playing some easy themes by composers such as Brahms, Mozart, and Rossini.

6th Grade Beginning Band students started a brand-new band instrument this year, no experience needed! At this point, most students have learned how to hold the instrument correctly, make a sound correctly, read and play their first 5 notes, understand how to read simple rhythm patterns, and can even play beginning band milestones such as Hot Cross Buns, Merrily We Roll Along, and Down By The Station.As you can guess, practicing a few times each week, at least 20 minutes at a time, is essential to keeping up with the class.

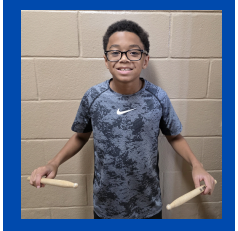
BAND Students of the Month

6



JAALA ISAAC, TRUMPET

7



EDMUND LEE, PERCUSSION

8



ANDREW STAFFARONI, ALTO SAXOPHONE

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BAND AT MADISON

FROM MR. THORNTON

Jazz Band students successfully auditioned a few weeks ago, and have been meeting on Wednesdays afterschool. They are off to a great start and have already started working on a couple of jazzy pieces for the winter concert. All of the concert bands will be working on winter concert music as well, after their trimester 1 test examples have been finished!

Auditioning for **Western Regionals** is a great way for more advanced players to work on more challenging material. Some of the most advanced 7th/8th grade band students are encouraged to represent our school...see Mr. Thornton for more information! Audition registration deadline is in early November.

Practicing is not overrated! Band students should be taking their instrument and music home a few times each week to practice! 8th grade students do not need to fill out practice sheets but they still should be practicing regularly. 6th and 7th grade students should be practicing it home, completing practice sheets to get credit for their practice time, and having parents sign it.

Congratulations to the **Students of the Month** for band! Whether it's for confident playing, working hard to show improvement, going above and beyond, or all of the above, these students deserve to be recognized.

Lastly, any **parents** who might be willing to help as part of an informal "Band Parents" group are asked to email Mr. Thornton at rthornto@trumbullps.org. There are a lot of logistics over the course of the year that would be much easier with some parents helping! A few from each grade level would be very helpful.

Many thanks!

-Rob Thornton, Band Director

MUSIC IN MOTION



Marching Band marching in the Memorial Day Parade,

LIVE ON STAGE!





Musicians at Madison learn that the process is as important as the product, but most probably agree that the product is more fun!

Madison's got Talent!

CONGRATULATIONS TO MADISON'S KARE CLUB TALENT SHOW!

Kids & Adults Reaching out to Everyone, otherwise known as KARE is Madison's community service club. Their primary fund raising comes from Madison's Got Talent, the talent show, so its a good thing that Madison has so many talented kids!



