

2019-2020 5th Grade Orchestra

I'm excited to begin 5th grade orchestra! Students will have the opportunity to learn to play violin, viola, cello, or bass. Please see below for important details.

1. **What days are classes held?** Ponderosa and Opportunity will meet Mondays and Wednesdays. Chester and Summit will meet Mondays and Fridays.
2. **When does 5th grade orchestra begin?** Orchestra will begin for Ponderosa and Opportunity on Wednesday, Sept. 25 and Chester and Summit on Friday, Sept. 27. Even if students have not had a chance to rent their instruments, still come that first day!
3. **Where are classes held?** All classes meet at Horizon Middle School **North** (the Old UHigh): 10304 E. 9th Ave. To drop off your child in the mornings, turn into the parking lot on 9th Ave. (not Valley Christian). The orchestra room is inside the main 500 building at the end of the hall in room 502. There will be signs the first day to help direct you where to go.
4. **What time is the class?** Wake up a little early! Classes are from **7:00-7:50 AM**. The class runs for the entire school year based on the school calendar (if there is no school for the district, we will not have class). I always plan to arrive by 6:50, but with two kids to get ready in the morning, I might be screeching in by 7:00. Thank you, in advance, for your patience! ☺
5. **How is my child transported to and from class?** Parents are responsible for transporting their child to Horizon Middle School North. A school bus will transport students back to his/her elementary school.
6. **What will my child do when they arrive back at the elementary school so early?** Because we have orchestra before the middle school begins, students do get back to the elementary usually well before school will begin for them. Please have them plan to bring things to do: reading, homework, games, etc. I know that all orchestra students will be able to handle this responsibility of keeping themselves busy and being the best representative of their school.
7. **What kind of instrument can my child play?** You can choose between violin, viola, cello, or bass. **Please no colored instruments** (see #11).
8. **When does your child need to have her/his instrument?** Try to have your instrument rented by the following week of our first meeting. Please talk to me if you have any questions.
9. **Where can I rent an instrument?** There are several good stores to choose from:

Custom Strings (509) 891-1243
11511 E. Trent Ave, Spokane Valley
They do repairs.

Hoffman's (509) 444-4140
1430 N Monroe, Spokane
They do repairs.

Clearwater Valley Music (509) 413-1137
321 N Pines Rd Suite C, Spokane Valley
They do repairs.

Amend Music Center (509) 456-0376
1305 West 14th Avenue, Spokane
They do repairs.

Ludiker Strings (509) 496-4250
1408 N. Vista Rd, Spokane Valley

The school district has a very limited number of instruments which are on loan for the year to students with financial need. Please contact me to find out more information.

10. **What is the cost of renting an instrument?** Depending on the music store, violins rent for about \$25/month, violas about \$25-35/month, cellos about \$50/month, and basses about \$70/month.
11. **Should I buy an instrument using the internet?** Unless it's from a company that only sells musical instruments, PLEASE NO! Very often, internet instruments are not set up for immediate use. They may need strings, a bridge, a good bow, and/or tuners. Sometimes, they are so bad that they can never successfully be played. People often end up spending more money getting a cheap instrument in playing condition. **THIS INCLUDES COLORED INSTRUMENTS.** Please feel free to contact me with any questions.
12. **What else do I need?** Besides an instrument, all students need to have:
- String Basics, book 1* (Terry Shade and Jeremy Woolstenhulme) for their particular instrument. If you can't find this at the music store you rent your instrument from, it is available on the internet. I have a few copies of the book at Horizon that students may use until they are able to get their own.
 - Rosin (for their bow)
 - A pencil (all musicians need one)
 - Cellos and bass: endpin anchor or stop (should come with the cello)
 - Violins and violas: SHOULDER REST. This is critical for good playing.
13. **Once I get an instrument and book, do I need to do anything before the first day?** Sure! Since we want to make sure instruments are kept safe and things are not lost, please label the case with at least your child's name (a luggage tag works great; if not, duct tape?). Please also have your child put their name in their book. I will also have markers/pens for students to do this in class.
14. **If my child plays cello or bass, can they take it home on the bus?** Unfortunately, no. Bus drivers do not allow the bigger instruments to go on the bus. We have a district employee who is able to take their cello/bass from Horizon MS to their elementary school every orchestra day. It will be up to you and your child to get the instrument home from school.
15. **How much should my child practice a day?** I recommend AT LEAST twenty minutes four times a week. I teach how to practice efficiently so that your child will get the most out of the experience. I will have practice videos and details on our Google Classroom page (please see last page of this letter) and students have an opportunity to earn PEG MONSTERS by turning in practice sheets that I will provide (more details later!).
16. **Will there be concerts?** Absolutely! Here is the schedule for the year:
- Thursday, November 14, 7:00 PM, Horizon Middle School North, 10304 E. 9th Ave.
 - NO CLASS Friday, November 15
 - Thursday, March 5, 7:00 PM, Horizon Middle School North, 10304 E. 9th Ave.
 - NO CLASS Friday, March 6
 - Tuesday, May 26 (day after Memorial Day!), 7:00 PM, University High School Theatre (with all Horizon orchestras and choirs), 12420 E. 32nd Ave
17. **How do I know if my child's instrument is really broken?** Bring the instrument to me. I can fix some things. If not, I will advise you on what to do.
18. **What is the difference between violin and fiddle?** They are the same instrument! Fiddle tunes are different from other genres of music. (Now you have a fun piece of trivia with which to impress your friends. ☺)

If you have any more questions, please let me know! I look forward to an exciting year!

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GOOGLE CLASSROOM:

The main way I communicate with you and your child is through our Google Classroom page. I will post announcements, homework assignments, fun videos or articles, and will have electronic copies of all the handouts I give to students. **Please sign up ASAP.** It is also a good idea to download the ap, if you have a smart phone/tablet, and it will alert you of any posts. **I will use this to communicate if I have to cancel class because of sickness.**

To sign up, go to classroom.google.com, login with your **child’s school email**, and click the + to join a class. Type in this class code: **5kz3ph9**. Once a student has joined, I will “invite” the guardian email listed below. If you have any troubles, please let me know.

REMIND ap:

I also have created a way of communication through the ap, “Remind.” This ap was created for educators to communicate with students and parents. I will use this for reminders about concerts, etc., AND to inform you if class needs to be cancelled because of sickness. To join:

- 1) Download “Remind.”
- 2) Enter this number: 81010
- 3) Text this message: @b4a4ff

2019-2020 5th Grade Orchestra Permission and Contact Information

****Please detach and bring this to the first day of class.****

I have read the information about orchestra and will allow my child to participate the entire year in 5th grade orchestra.

Student’s First and Last Name _____

School _____

What instrument do you want to play? _____

Do you already have an instrument? _____

Do you need the school to provide an instrument? (The limited school instruments I have are reserved for students who have a financial need. Please contact me with questions.) _____

5th Grade Teacher’s Name _____

Parent’s Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Parent Signature _____