

SUSD 5TH GRADE MUSIC

Be a part of the music!

Dear parents and guardians,

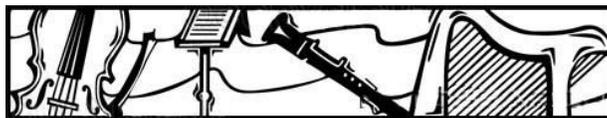
Welcome back to a new school year! We are thrilled to work with your students this year and the upcoming exciting weeks. Finally as of last year, 5th graders now have two options to explore and discover music!

Your student will now be able to choose between General Music or Beginning Band this year.

With the continued support of SEF, **General Music** will continue in the pedagogical explorations that your students have been exploring since Kindergarten, using methodology from the Orff Schulwerk, Kodaly, and general music theory practices to continue their progress of a comprehensive survey, understanding and performance of music as a comprehensive art form.

In partnership with the Saratoga Music Boosters (SMB), the **Beginning Band** program will take students through the exciting first steps of learning to play one of our “Big Four” band instruments: flute, clarinet, trumpet or euphonium/baritone. This is **the** beginning program, now partly in the school day, that will take students into the band program at Redwood Middle School and beyond!

While the General Music track mostly occurs entirely during students’ regular in-school music time, Beginning Band takes students through the process of learning an entirely new intellectual and physical skill, and thus does involve additional considerations and commitments. Please consult these below as you make a decision with your student.



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR BEGINNING BAND

- **How will I know what to play?** • Students will be taken through an instrument fitting and selection process during the first couple of weeks of the year. As each instrument has its own unique characteristics and is played differently, the fitting process helps us determine which instruments are better suited for success, and which ones should be avoided. This process includes mouthpiece trials and listening activities and evaluations. Students will let us know of their top instrument choices, which will in turn allow us to narrow down their final instrument assignment. Due to the limitations of distance learning, the process will be a little different than normal, but we will do as much as we can to replicate the process virtually!
- **What else do we need to know?** • In place of our formal **orientation night**, we will later share a video “orientation” with more information for students and parents as they embark on their journey into the band world! We will hear some more examples of instruments, get an overview of the program, learn about instrument rental options, and more! **Do not rent or purchase instruments yet!**

- **Is one practice a week enough to learn an instrument?** • The short answer is no. In-school sessions are designed as sectionals to guide students through some of the basics and techniques, but consistent and daily at-home practice is necessary in order to be successful on any instrument. Students will have some time during music sessions to practice on their own, and will also be expected to practice about 10 minutes a day, building up to 20 minutes daily by the end of the year. Being consistent to be successful on an instrument requires dedication and commitment!
- **What are the expectations of student responsibility?** • Musical instruments are expensive and often-fragile pieces of equipment ranging from \$400-\$1500 per instrument in addition to other materials such as reeds, grease, oil, etc. Students are expected to properly care for and maintain their instruments after each practice session. This takes special care and dedication!
- **What are the practice expectations?** • See notes above. 😊 Think of it as musical homework, but much more fun! Band students should practice at home between rehearsals. Like any physical skill, this requires consistency, independence, perseverance and discipline to develop complex physical coordination and translate theory into instantaneous instrumental performance! Playing an instrument during in-class meetings only is not sufficient to ensure success.
- **Are there performances?** • Performances are the equivalent of musical mid-term and/or final exams. While performances are currently on pause as long as we are still managing through the current pandemic, we can't wait to put our students on stage together once it is safe to do so again!
- **What other support do you need?** • As always, there are notable expenses with instrumental music programs. While we will always allow every interested student to participate in band, we do request support through contributions to afford instrument repairs and maintenance via our loan agreements and also through music booster contributions to afford more instrumental specialists to work with smaller sections of students and maximize individual instruction and attention, especially during remote learning. More information to come on these soon!

To assist us in planning and proper placement of your student's music track for the year, we ask that you [click here](#) and **submit the selection form to let us know your preference by the end of Sunday, August 30**. Students for which we do not receive a form entry by the deadline will be placed into General Music. This will indicate to us how the 5th grade music sessions will be split and allow us to test and fit the correct students for their appropriate instruments should they be interested in the band route. Additional questions? Please email us!

Thank you so much for your help. We look forward to a wonderful year of music with your students!

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SUSD Elementary General Music: bit.ly/susdgm



SUSD Instrumental Music: redwoodmusic.us
Saratoga Music Boosters: saratogamusicboosters.org