



September, 2019

2019-2020 NOKOMIS 4th GRADE ORCHESTRA NEWSLETTER

Welcome back to the Nokomis Orchestra Program! Please take a few minutes to read over this newsletter as it contains a great deal of information concerning 4th Grade Orchestra!!

Instruments

All orchestra instruments will be provided by Sachem for 4th graders. Students will be receiving an instrument as well as an instrument loan contract at their first lesson. **THERE IS NO CHARGE TO BORROW THE INSTRUMENT FROM THE DISTRICT.** This contract must be submitted before any instrument will be assigned and taken home. Cellos and basses are not allowed on the bus because of their size; as a result these students will have an instrument at school and an instrument at home. Please e-mail me to make special arrangements to pick up these instruments at school in the next week or two. All other students (violins and violas) must bring the instrument back and forth to school.

Supplies

Even though 4th grade orchestra students will be borrowing their *instruments* from the school, students will still need to purchase a couple of key items. The list of required items can be found on the Nokomis Music website – www.nokomismusic.weebly.com. **Please purchase these items in the next week as we will begin working with them immediately.** The attached shopping list will be helpful to ensure that your child is fully prepared by the time lessons begin.

Lessons and Rehearsals

Students will receive one 40-minute lesson each week during the school day starting the week of September 16th. These lessons will rotate to minimize classroom impact. Students are expected check the schedule and attend all lessons and rehearsals as it is the only way to enhance learning and achieve success. Lesson schedules will be posted in their 4th grade classroom, outside my door and on my website, www.nokomismusic.weebly.com. In the meantime, I invite you to join the 4th grade orchestra on remind.com, by texting **@4nokorch to 81010**. Attendance is expected at each lesson with their instrument, method book, music binder, and supplies along with having practiced their music assignment to the best of their ability.

Starting in February, those students who have successfully received their Beginning Orchestra Certificate will be invited to participate in 4th grade orchestra rehearsals. This rehearsal will be held after school on Tuesdays from 2:30 – 3:10. More information regarding these rehearsals will be forthcoming as this time draws closer.

Beginning Orchestra Certificate

The Beginning Orchestra Certificate is each student's ticket to participating in the 4th grade orchestra rehearsals when they begin in February, and the Beginners' Concert in June. Each instrumentalist will be expected to successfully perform a certain number of exercises, rhythms and techniques to be awarded this certificate. These requirements are not designed to create stress or anxiety but rather to enhance the overall performance of each student in addition to ensuring the best ensemble experience the program has to offer. More information will be available on the first few days of lessons and on the Nokomis Music website.

Attendance

One of the aspects all instrumental music students are graded on is participation. It is expected that students attend all lessons and rehearsals in order to capture the team spirit and achievement that ensures a great experience not only in lessons and rehearsals but at the concert as well. Only an e-mail or letter from a parent/guardian will excuse a student from a rehearsal. **After three (3) unexcused absences, students will be asked not to perform at the concert.**

I am flexible with lesson attendance for such reasons as preparation for important tests, remedial services and other circumstances to be determined at the discretion of the classroom teachers. Please get in touch with me if you have any specific concerns about your child.

Practicing: Other aspects that will be graded include note accuracy, tone, and technique among others that are directly linked to practicing at home. Practicing is very simply the musical term for homework and is expected to be done at least five days per week for a minimum of 20 minutes each day. Also, a practice log will be utilized and must be filled out and signed by a parent each week. This remains the primary key to success in music performance and essential to boost and reach the full potential of every performer and the group. Keys to helping your child practice effectively are available on the Nokomis Music website under the Helpful Info tab.

Concert

The 4th grade orchestra will be performing in a morning concert for family and friends on Tuesday, May 19th, 2020 at 9:15 am, at Nokomis Elementary School. This concert is the culmination of all their hard work and practice throughout the year and the beginning of their successful school career in music. (Dress code: Spring colors- Boys/Girls: nice pants/shirt- Girls: dress-skirt/top- No t-shirts with writing or workout clothes)

Website

In an effort to make more resources available for students and parents, there is a Nokomis Music website that is available to students and their families. The address is: **www.nokomismusic.weebly.com** It contains lesson schedules, helpful practice tips, announcements, printable practice logs, recordings of our orchestra music and other great resources for students and parents as well. There is even a contact page that is linked to my e-mail address at school. Please visit it often, as it will be updated weekly. In the meantime, I invite you to join the 4th grade orchestra on remind.com, by texting **@4nokorch to 81010**.

I am greatly looking forward to meeting and teaching your children what music has to offer them and how much fun it can be. Please check out the website for ways that you can ensure your child succeeds in orchestra!

Thank you very much for your continued support of our music program and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dylan Benson
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