



September 2019

## **2019-2020 NOKOMIS 5<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra!!

### **Instruments**

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, violins and violas must be commercially rented or purchased. Sachem will continue to provide cellos and basses. These students will receive an instrument for home, and a second one for school. Students who play one of those instruments will receive a contract that documents the instrument loan. **THERE IS NO CHARGE TO BORROW THIS 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.

If you will be commercially renting, I recommend doing so as soon as possible because the instruments are rented on a first come first serve basis and the best ones tend to go quickly. If you are interested in purchasing a new instrument, the old saying “you get what you pay for” really applies to instruments. So, please feel free to contact me with any questions concerning brands of instruments, quality or anything regarding your purchase at [dbenson@sachem.edu](mailto:dbenson@sachem.edu).

### **Supplies**

Just like last year, students are expected to bring their instruments to every lesson (except for Cellos and Basses as I will have one at school to use). Also, a list of additional supplies can be found on the Nokomis Music website – [www.nokomismusic.weebly.com](http://www.nokomismusic.weebly.com). In the meantime, I will provide a printed list of necessary supplies to each student. Please be sure to purchase these supplies before our first lesson.

### **Lessons and Rehearsals**

Students will receive one 40-minute lesson each week during the school day starting the week of September 16<sup>th</sup>. 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 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, outside my door and on my website, [www.nokomismusic.weebly.com](http://www.nokomismusic.weebly.com). In the meantime, I invite you to join the 5<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra on remind.com, by texting **@5nokorch to 81010**. Attendance is expected at each lesson with their instrument, book, music folder, and pencil along with having practiced their music assignment to the best of their ability.

Rehearsals will occur twice weekly (on Tuesdays and Thursdays) starting on **Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>**, and will run from 2:30 – 3:10. Starting in February, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra will begin rehearsals, and will absorb the Tuesday rehearsal slot. At that time, 5<sup>th</sup> grade rehearsals will be reduced to only Thursday afternoons. A permission slip is attached to this packet, and must be reviewed, signed, and returned before any student is permitted to attend after school rehearsal.

## **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) rehearsal 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.

## **Concerts**

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, instrumentalists perform in a Winter and a Spring concert, both of which are held at Seneca Middle School. The Winter Concert this year is scheduled for **Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019**, and the Spring Concert is on **Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. Please take note of these dates, as they represent the culmination of all of the students' dedication and hard work. All students are expected to perform at both concerts. More specific information about each concert will come home a couple of weeks beforehand. All concerts are at 7:00 pm, with a report time of 6:30.

## **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](http://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 families 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 5<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra on remind.com, by texting **@5nokorch 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  
dbenson@sachem.edu

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